

# Collaborative Capacity and the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County: Stakeholder Perspectives

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## **Abstract**

This research examines one anti-poverty initiative adopted at the federal level and its impact at a local level by exploring the complex interplay of policy development, implementation and collaboration. This study examines the divergent and convergent viewpoints of key stakeholders regarding efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County, and the potency of the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness. Particular attention is given to the role of collaborative efforts to achieve local goals. Community characteristics that supported the success of the initiative are explored as well.

Stakeholder groups interviewed for this research include nonprofit staff, City of Portland staff, City of Portland elected officials and their staff, as well as Multnomah County elected officials and their staff. Twenty interviews were performed with representatives from nine nonprofits, two departments for the City of Portland and related agencies including the Housing Authority of Portland and the Police Bureau. Several current and former elected officials from the City and County, as well as their staff were interviewed.

Findings suggest that pre-existing resources in the community supported the positive outcomes from the Plan. In part, prior efforts made Portland and Multnomah County a successful competitor for multi-million dollar grants; this fortified their ability to develop and implement their Plan. This study's findings also suggest that the Plan provided a more inclusive forum to address the issue of homelessness than had historically come together; specifically, stakeholders noted the importance of family providers getting their fair place at the "table." The importance of the specific leaders who held key roles- and characteristics of these leaders- in designing and implementing the plan emerged as an important theme, as well. Last, beyond differences which are intuitively apparent, there do not seem to be any notable differences between stakeholder perspectives. Those interviewed for this project seemed to recognize and honor any inherent differences in their roles, responsibilities and oversight.

# VITAE

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Eugene, OR

##### *Board Member*

2008-present

- Perform audit on management-employee communication processes for an agency facility employing a strategic planning model.
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- Developed criteria and analytical methods to identify target communities and potential partner agencies statewide focusing on financial stability.
- Led marketing team in short-term and long-term planning for partnership development.
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2004-2006

- Provided case management to tenants coming from homelessness and promoted tenant self-advocacy.
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## Chapter 1: Introduction

This research examines one anti-poverty initiative adopted at the federal level and its impact at a local level. The intention was to gain insight into the complex interplay of policy development, implementation and collaboration. In particular, this research sought to illuminate the community characteristics that support the success of local initiatives by examining the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness developed for the City of Portland and Multnomah County. Another aim of this research was to identify any systemic differences in stakeholders' perspectives that may have obstructed or supported their efforts. Stakeholder groups include nonprofit staff, City of Portland staff, City of Portland elected officials and their staff, as well as Multnomah County elected officials and their staff. Twenty interviews were performed with representatives from nine nonprofits, two departments for the City of Portland and related agencies including the Housing Authority of Portland and the Police Bureau. Several current and former elected officials from the City and County, as well as their staff were interviewed. This section will provide brief introductory information regarding the historical and theoretical backdrop for this research; this includes a historical overview of relevant policy issues and a discussion of collaboration.

### *Policy*

The Great Depression marked the first period in the history of the United States in which homelessness became a pressing issue for policy makers. Homelessness became a focus for policy interventions once again in the aftermath of the 1981-1982 recession (Allgood et al 2003, p. 273). The issue of homelessness has received continued attention from policy makers, because of its persistence in spite of the relative "prosperity of the past decade" [1992-2002](Allgood, 2003, p. 274).

In 1987, policy makers responded to the concerns of the public and special interest lobbyists regarding the growing problem of homelessness in the United States by crafting the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. Early (1998) describes this Act as, "The Federal government's most notable response to the problem of homelessness" (10). The funding targeted at providing services to the homeless population is allocated by nine Federal agencies. McKinney funding is used to support a wide variety of activities to serve the homeless: "...emergency shelter, transitional housing, food assistance, health care, alcohol and drug treatment, and job training" (10).

This 1987 act also established the Interagency Council on the Homeless with the mission of developing a "comprehensive Federal approach to end homelessness" ("Our Mission," n.d.). The mission further states that this effort is based in the understanding that "homelessness is affected by factors that cut across Federal agencies, including housing costs, job readiness, education, substance abuse and mental health" ("Our Mission," n.d.). The Council's vision as described by Philip Mangano, Executive Director is a "...home for every American" ("Our Mission," n.d.). Mangano describes *strategic collaborative efforts* beginning with the White House and "extend[ing] to the street...with state and local government, homeless and mainstream providers and advocates, and homeless people themselves" ("Our Mission," n.d.) as the mechanism by which this vision will be fulfilled. He furthers, "Our intent is to include everyone in the response," ("Our Mission," n.d.).

The Council asserts that “homelessness is a national problem with local solutions” that will be found through multi-sector collaborations (“State and Local,” n.d.). To this end Federal Regional Interagency Councils and State Interagency Councils on Homelessness and Jurisdictional 10-year Plans to End Chronic Homelessness have been developed. *Federal Regional Interagency Councils* were developed to provide a venue in which “...key regional representatives of Federal agencies are convened to mirror” their “federal partners in Washington” (“Our Mission,” n.d.) with whom they share the work of improving access to resources for homeless populations. The key role of the *State Interagency Councils on Homelessness* has been to establish *State level councils* “...by legislative authority or Governor’s Executive Order...with representation at the Cabinet level from the mainstream income support, health care, behavioral health, human services, veterans, corrections, transportation, education, and labor departments” (“Our Mission,” n.d.). Last, cities and counties have been encouraged to develop their own *jurisdictional 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness*. These plans emphasize results, “...cost benefit analysis and prevention, housing, and services innovations and best practices” (“Our Mission,” n.d.). According to the Interagency Council on Homelessness, in Oregon, only Portland/ Multnomah County have developed their own 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness at this time. However, according to a report released in October 2007 on county development of 10-year plans to end homelessness in Oregon, 13 counties in Oregon have begun developing 10-year plans (“October 2007 Status”, n.d.).

#### *Collaboration and Ending Homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah County*

Wood and Gray’s (1991) attempt to develop a comprehensive definition of collaboration posits that “Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to the domain”(146). According to this definition, the Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness leading efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County should be considered a collaborative body.

There are three desired outcomes of the collaborative 10-year Plan: 1) “Fewer people become homeless,” 2) “The frequency and duration of homelessness is reduced” and 3) “More homeless people move into and stay stable in permanent housing” (“Action Plan”, pg. 1). According to the *Report on the 2007 Street Count*, the collaborative efforts to end homelessness have resulted in meaningful reductions in the number of homeless people observed in comparison to those observed in 2005. The number of homeless people observed decreased by 39% (from 2,355 in 2005 to 1,438 in 2007). Additionally, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness decreased by 70% (from 1,284 in 2005 to 386 in 2007) (5). The report asserts that “...the data from the 2007 Street Count correlates to the outcomes of the City of Portland and Multnomah County’s 10-year plan to end homelessness”(10). This offers compelling evidence that the collaborative bodies established to support the 10-year plan to end homelessness are achieving their goals.

*This study examines the divergent and convergent viewpoints of key stakeholders regarding the potency of the 10-year plan to end homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah County. Particular attention is given to the role of collaborative efforts to achieve local goals.* For example, do stakeholders perceive that the ten-year plan strengthened collaborative efforts to end homelessness? How and why? Alternatively, did the already existing collaborations to end



homelessness provide an environment in which the 10-year plan would be successfully developed and implemented? An examination of the divergent and convergent viewpoints of key stakeholders can provide insight into what has given the ten-year plan its strength in Portland/Multnomah County. Additionally, because the stakeholders included in the sample represent a broad cross-section, the results should offer insight into any systematic differences in their perspectives<sup>1</sup>. This information has the potential to support the creation of more effective policy, implementation and collaborative efforts to address housing and homelessness in Portland/Multnomah County and other urban settings as well.

The following section, *Chapter 2* provides a literature review including a discussion of policy regarding housing and homelessness, the theoretical underpinnings of collaboration, and collaboration between community organizations and city governments. *Chapter 3* discusses the research setting and methods for this study; this includes collaborative efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County, the study sample and procedures for data collection. *Chapter 4* explores the results of this research including stakeholder identification and perspectives on community characteristics and the Plan, what is needed for the future, what is personally relevant to stakeholders and their views of assumptions made in this research. *Chapter 5* concludes this work and offers recommendations. *Chapter 6* offers a brief discussion of the limitations of this research.

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<sup>1</sup> A further description of the sample can be found in the methods section. The sample includes representatives from local nonprofits, staff from the city of Portland, elected officials from the city of Portland, staff from Multnomah County Government, elected officials from Multnomah County Government.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Literature needed to set the stage for this research addresses: State and Federal policy impacts at the local level, the theoretical underpinnings of collaboration and research examining collaboration as it relates to local efforts to reduce poverty.

### *Ending Homelessness: the Impacts of State and Federal Policy*

A broad view of historical highlights related to low-income housing can be found in Oberleke's (2000) article. In this publication, he describes two distinct periods in the evolution of low-income housing policy in the United States: 1949-1973 and 1973 to the end of the twentieth century. The first period began when the United States federal government first took on housing as an important policy issue in 1949, claiming the ambitious goal of providing a "decent home and a suitable living environment for every family" (489). This policy goal was intended to encompass the needs of more than those in the direst circumstances. Not surprisingly, the policy challenge was in defining those in "most need" and identifying who besides those in most need should receive housing assistance. Although the federal government had taken the lead and new programs were started, Oberleke describes that there was not enough political momentum or the leadership to support the success of the intervention programs (490).

The 1968 Housing Act enacted by Congress reaffirmed the general goals first established for the nation in 1949 and established a specific goal of "...constructing or rehabilitating twenty-six million housing units" (495) within the decade (by 1978). Six-million of these units were intended for low- and moderate-income families. As Oberleke describes, this act demonstrated the intentions to "move beyond rhetoric to a serious run at a quantified goal and disciplined time table" (495). As President Nixon entered office, he reaffirmed the goals of the 1968 act. However, in 1971, the *President's Third Annual Report on National Housing Goals* described a housing environment in which housing production was no longer the most important intervention. As the middle class fled from cities to the suburbs en masse, there was suddenly no shortage of housing (496-7). On the eve of the 1972 elections, the Joint Economic Committee of Congress released six papers commissioned from policy experts that were highly critical of current programs at the time. Shortly following Nixon's reelection in 1972, he mandated a moratorium on "all new subsidy commitments" (490). This led to "demand side subsidies and devolution of low-income production decisions to state and local governments" (502).

Oberleke (2000) suggests that the period from 1973 to 2000 is defined by the devolution of housing policy. The federal government has taken an increasingly smaller role in the provision of subsidized housing, while states and local governments have provided more leadership. Since 1973, several policy interventions have been developed that have had a significant presence in the devolution of housing policy: block grants, vouchers, and tax credits (491). The 1990 Housing Act marked the formal transfer of leadership regarding subsidized housing interventions from a federal to the state and local level. Similar to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), this act transfers federal money to states and local governments for housing production and rehabilitation for renters and low-income owners (491). Oberleke (2000) concludes his historical overview by asserting that he does "...not believe we are near another major turning point in housing policy" and suggests that low-income housing advocates "...push for a steady expansion of all three program[s]" (517) which includes block grants, vouchers and tax credits.

Other commentators have noted changes in housing policies and programs that developed since 1990. According to Turner and Rawlings (2005) during the 1990s federal housing policies changed significantly: "...[M]any of the nation's most distressed public housing developments" were "replaced with healthier, mixed-income communities"(6) using several initiatives (experimental interventions) developed by HUD's office of Policy Development and Research (PD &R). The initiatives described by Turner and Rawlings (2005) were a response to the growing body of work offering evidence that living in high-poverty communities undermines a person's long-term life chances. Similarly, Nelson and Khadduri (1992) describe homeownership as another "central objective of housing policy for low-income Americans" (4), during the early 1990s.

Three milestones in homeless assistance programs over the past two decades are highlighted in Burt's (2006) testimony before the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee. First, the 1987 Steward B. McKinney Homeless Act made Federal resources available "...to communities... for transitional and permanent supportive<sup>2</sup> housing..." and "...codified Emergency Shelter Grants...and the Emergency Food and Shelter Program..." (2) for the first time. Second, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (this Office administers McKinney Act funds) "...established its Continuum of Care<sup>3</sup> approach to disbursing the homeless assistance resources under its control" (2). Last, in 2001, the "...Federal government adopted the goal of ending chronic homelessness in 10 years. Annual set-asides under the McKinney-Vento Act of 30 percent for new permanent supportive housing have promoted this goal" (2).

In their 10-year Action Plan to End Homelessness (2004), the City of Portland and Multnomah County describe the adverse impacts of state and federal policy, throughout the past four decades. However, they make no mention of the milestones described by Burt (2006). First, the Action Plan (2004) describes the closure of state-funded mental institutions between 1960 and 1980. While community mental health centers were to be developed to support those being moved out of the institutionalized setting, this never happened and instead large numbers of people with major mental illness found themselves turned out on to the streets. Second, the Action Plan (2004) states that from 1980-2000 "Federal funding for rental-housing construction and for rent-subsidy assistance has been halved" ("Action Plan," 13) from \$32 billion to \$16 billion. Undoubtedly, the state and federal policy changes mentioned by Burt (2006) and the Action Plan (2004) impact issues pertaining to housing and homelessness on a local level.

### *Collaboration: Theoretical Underpinnings*

Collaboration and reaching collaborative capacity are concepts and practices that will be explored in this research. Therefore, relevant literature will be reviewed here with specific attention given to defining collaboration, typologies of collaborative groups and collaborative capacity.

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<sup>2</sup> In Rog's (2004) article, she describes supportive housing as "...independent housing in the community that is coupled with the provision of community mental health and support services" (334). She furthers that this model is an emergent trend from the 1980s "...as an alternative to the residential continuum...a range of housing options with differentiating levels of staff intensity" (334).

<sup>3</sup>Continuum of Care describes HUD funding which requires communities demonstrate collaborative interagency efforts to end chronic homelessness.

### Defining Collaboration

Several authors have provided definitions of collaboration. For instance, Wood and Gray (1991) reviewed nine research based articles and two overviews in terms of four "...overarching issues essential to a comprehensive theory of collaboration" (139). These include: 1) defining collaboration, 2) when it is convened and the role of the convener, 3) environmental complexity/ "participant control over the environment" and 4) self-interest versus group-interest. Wood and Gray's (1991) attempt to develop a comprehensive definition of collaboration posits that "Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to the domain"(146). Regarding the role of the convener, the literature offers,

"...no firm conclusions...as to how the convener uses various forms of authority to identify and persuade stakeholders to participate, which differences can be observed when conveners are responsive to stakeholder initiatives or are proactive in implementing their own ideas, or which specific roles conveners might play in helping organize the problem domain" (149).

Last, Wood and Gray (1991) state that regarding environmental complexity and control, the literature suggests, "...organizations collaborate to reduce and control environmental uncertainty and turbulence" (155). However, while collaboration can increase predictability within an environment in some respects, its creation may actually increase complexity.

Julian's (1994) literature review sought to fill the gap in research related to collaborative social problem solving. In the review, Julian's (1994) intention was to integrate research, which, up to that point, had either emphasized theory or substantive domains (case studies) alone, but rarely both. The review focuses mainly on mandated collaborative activities among human service providers. Julian (1994) found that the "...literature related to collaborative problem-solving is inconsistent and based on a number of competing theoretical perspectives" (12). However, after a sweeping review of the literature from the 1970's through the early 1990s, Julian (1994) uses the following working definition of collaboration: a "...process through which multiple stakeholders identify a common mission, allocate resources, and engage in activities designed to achieve that mission"(4).

Other definitions include Selin and Chavez (1995) who state that collaboration is composed of "techniques [that] emphasize sustained dialogue between stakeholders to resolve differences and advance a shared vision of the future..." (190). It is process oriented and "tailored to... [the] unique demands of [the] situation rather than using the same approach for all issues" (190). In a more recent attempt at capturing a comprehensive definition of collaboration, Rich et al (2001) writes sweepingly, "Academic definitions of collaboration typically include a power-sharing relationship between partners" (198).

### Collaboration Group Typology

In addition to defining collaboration, researchers have developed descriptions of the types of groups involved in collaboration and how group composition may be related to accomplishments. For instance, Moore and Koontz (2003), developed "...a typology of collaborative groups based on member composition" (451). The field has been hesitant to do this, because of the uniqueness of each collaborative group, but the authors "...argue that it is

useful to build theory by identifying types of groups that exist and differentiate among the various functions of these different group types” (452).

The authors examined 64 watershed groups in Ohio and classified them into three groups:

- Citizen Based- “primarily composed of private citizens” (454).
- Agency Based- “primarily composed of public representatives” (454).
- Mixed- “composed of an equal mix of public and private representatives” (454).

Using ANOVA and cross tabulations quantitative analysis, Moore and Koontz (2003) found “...several systematic differences in group accomplishments” (451). Significant findings are listed below:

- Mixed groups “were significantly more likely than citizen-based or agency-based to list *creation of a management plan* as an accomplishment” (455).
- Mixed and agency-based groups “more frequently cited group development and sustainability than did citizen-based groups” (455), although findings were marginally significant.
- “...mixed and citizen-based groups more often cited *increased public awareness* as an outcome than did agency-based groups” (455). Again, the findings are marginally significant.

Findings support the work of other scholars that suggest, “different types of groups may be necessary to accomplish particular types of goals” (Moore and Koontz, 2003, pp. 453).

Although Moore and Koontz’s (2003) research was on watershed groups, their findings offer insight into how group composition may impact organizing for other collaborative efforts.

### Collaborative Capacity

Bardach (2001) discusses craftsmanship theory, evolutionary theory, leadership and commotion processes as concepts that work together to explain interagency collaborative capacity (ICC). Each of these elements is important to understanding how agencies may work well together to attain common goals.

Craftsmanship theory is a conceptual framework that “...posits some number of individuals is potentially relevant to building effective [ICC]...” (152). Reaching “capacity”, according to Bardach (2001) indicates that a level of full potential has been reached in several domains such as: division of labor, operating routines, and internal communications. Bardach furthers that “platforming” is the “sequenced development of a collaborative body” (152) including the development of creative opportunity, intellectual capital, implementation networks, advocacy groups, etc. (153).

Bardach’s (2001) discussion of evolutionary theory explores “emergent properties” of communities in which several hundred people in a locale are invested in a community issue. Describing momentum processes as an emergent property of a community reaching ICC he states “...perceptions or attitudes...come to prevail more widely in the public, changing what might be thought of as the climate of opinion, attitude, and expectations”(156). Through this process, “Changes in [the collective] climate feed back into individual-level interactions, either positively or negatively” (156). Bardach’s (2001) discussion of momentum processes is similar to DeVries et al’s (2001) exploration of “...the impact of majority and minority influence on attitude change and persuasion, on individual and group problem solving, and on group

performance and innovation” (2). This review of the literature examines several theories of persuasion and studies testing them. The findings from one study are described using the lens of conversion theory. This theory “...predicts that majorities who enforce conformity instigate superficial processing of their position...” (6). However, “The validation process that minorities cause is a systematic thought process” (6). According to DeVries et al (2001), specific to this kind of cognitive processing, “the thoughts that come up should be related to attitude change” (6). Interestingly, ICC as described by Bardach (2001) involves a potentially minority viewpoint reaching “critical mass” through conversion.

Third, Bardach (2001) mentions leadership as an important component of ICC success in much the same way Burt et al (2007) describes leadership as an integral part of community organization. Broadly, Bardach (2001) describes leadership as a “...set of focus-giving or unity-enhancing behaviors that would help some collectivity” and that can be performed by one person, a duo or a threesome (157). In their book *Communication Within Groups*, Johnson and Johnson (1982) describe that the most effective communication among group members within an authority hierarchy occurs when “...a cooperative group climate that encourages the equal participation of all members” has been established (213). Additionally, the authors suggest promoting “...group norms that foster the feeling that a member’s ideas and views, no matter what his [her] authority level, are of real interest to other group members” (Johnson & Johnson, 1982, pp. 213).

Similarly, Kaner (1996) describes a both/ and mindset as an essential tool for reaching long-term solutions to complex problems. This “mindset” describes a process “...of finding...inclusive solution[s]...that...” encompasses “...everyone’s point of view” (146). Kaner (1996) follows that this process places “...a higher value on effectiveness than on expedience” (146). It is useful to consider these interpersonal nuances within the context of Bardach’s (2001) emphasis of leadership and the implicit hierarchy.

Last, commotion processes are described by Bardach (2001) in the context of ICC as the optimal amount of “...stir[ring] the pot...enough to keep a lively flow of...possibilities” (158) that lead to turnover, growth and momentum.

#### How Theory Informs Research

The theory and research discussed has informed this research in two ways. First, it situates current efforts in their historical context. Oberleke (2000) describes the decreased role of the federal government in providing subsidized housing between 1973 and 2000, and increasingly the transfer of federal funding to local efforts. Portland and Multnomah County’s “Action Plan” describes the closure of state funded mental institutions between 1960 and 1980, and the defunding of federal housing programs between 1980 and 2000 as contributing to the pervasiveness of homelessness locally. Last, Burt (2006) describes three “milestone” in efforts to end homelessness on the federal level:

- 1987-The Stewart B. McKinney Act.
- HUD requires local collaboration for funding through Continuum of Care.
- 2001- The federal government adopts the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness initiative.

To have any sense of the specific initiative that is the object of this study, it is pertinent to have a grasp of the larger policy context from which it has emerged.

Second, the theoretical underpinnings of collaboration are integral to this work. The exploration of how theorists have defined collaboration gives this research a good framework for discussion. Additionally, Moore and Koontz's (2003) discussion of typology helps position "collaboration" as it is described in this work within a spectrum. Last, capacity building as described by Bardach (2001) helps ground the discussion of building "political will" and "leadership."

### *Collaboration Between Community Organizations and City Governments*

The focus of this research is collaboration between community organizations and local government entities (City and County), so a discussion of the research that explores this is relevant here. This section will explore Rich et al's (2001) study which describes the importance of the phase of the initiative for which the collaborative is formed, the benefits of collaboration and adoption of a comprehensive and strategic approach to poverty reduction.

The research of Rich et al (2001) intended to support a better understanding of the ways community organizations and city governments work together to reduce poverty and revitalize neighborhoods. Additionally, their research sought to identify "...factors that contribute to effective collaboration" and "those that impose barriers" (185). A national survey of city and community based organizations' (CBOs) officials "in cities with populations of 50,000 or more" was sent to mayors and those community organizations on membership lists for four national associations of community-based organizations.

Results demonstrate that "City-CBO relations may vary by when collaboration occurs..." (Rich et al, 2001, pp. 191). Specifically, the "extent of perceived collaboration varies considerably across the phases of initiatives" and is "judged to be the highest in the early phases...such as identifying community needs" (191).

Regarding *barriers*, Rich et al (2001) found CBOs and city governments pointing fingers at each other. CBOs largely described "...city government and the local political environment" (195) as "bureaucratic," controlling and the "primary obstacles to effective collaboration to reduce poverty" (195). City governments, however, described CBOs "with limited resources, poor administration and parochial interests as the major stumbling block" (195). Pertaining to the *benefits of collaboration*, respondents saw "...collaborations yielding substantial benefits" such as improving city governments' "...understanding of community issues" by which they are "able to design and implement programs that better fit community needs"(197).

Rich et al (2001) describes the *most interesting finding* as "...the adoption of a comprehensive and strategic approach to poverty reduction" by 56% of the city and "slightly half of the CBO respondents" (195). A majority of respondents (city 72% and CBO 70%) reported that the adoption of a comprehensive and strategic approach to poverty reduction involving multiple partners and program areas is a valuable strategy for fostering more effective collaborations.

### *Local Homelessness Prevention Strategies and the Role of Collaboration*

Burt et al (2007) also explore characteristics of macro-level collaborative efforts to prevent homelessness. In their study of community-wide homelessness prevention, Burt et al (2007) examined key elements of successful strategies to prevent homelessness in six communities.

They found several key factors supporting effective strategies including: "...mechanisms for accurate targeting [of those most vulnerable to homelessness], a high level of jurisdictional commitment, significant mainstream agency involvement, and mechanisms for continuous system improvement" (213). In addition to effective targeting, there are three elements the study identified in their sample communities which "appear to contribute to homelessness prevention" relating specifically to *community organization*. These include:

- Community motivation- "...community accepts an obligation to shelter one or more at-risk population...the jurisdiction accepts that it must provide funds to fulfill it..." (221).
- Maximize resources- "Collaboration among public and private agencies helps stretch resources and creates new resources...that did not previously exist" (221).
- Leadership- "...is essential at two levels: agency heads and public figures must commit to developing and sustaining a community-wide prevention strategy" (221).

Further, the communities in which the highest levels of organization were observed shared the following elements: "...their present situation [was reached] deliberately and over time, in a process that involved, and continues to involve, leadership, analytic thinking, strategic planning, alliance building, and collaboration" (221). Last, more comprehensive approaches with the resources necessary to support them were implemented in communities "Where public agencies led or shaped prevention strategies" (226) according to Burt et al (2007). To some degree this research will consider: community motivation, how scarce resources are maximized and leadership. This research is also pertinent in its emphasis of collaboration as integral to effective community organization as it relates to homelessness prevention.

#### How the Literature Informs Research

First, it is paramount to understand how the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness relates to the broader history of policy interventions related to housing and homelessness. It is particularly important to this research as many of *those interviewed have been involved in efforts to end homelessness for several decades. Therefore, their efforts have been personally impacted by the policies discussed* (the Stewart B. McKinney Act, Continuum of Care, 10-year Plan, the closure of state funded mental institutions, defunding of federal housing programs, etc.). This also makes their collective vantage points more sophisticated than they otherwise might be. Second, exploring the theoretical underpinnings of collaboration gives this research a solid foundation and point of reference for analysis. This literature touches on building "political will" and leadership, as well as other intangible, but necessary elements for effective collaboration (of the sort this research addresses). Last, research that examines defining elements of effective collaboration in the context of "local" efforts is important to discuss as those issues relate to the heart of the research done for this project based in Portland and Multnomah County, Oregon.

#### Working Hypothesis

The working hypothesis that emerged during the research process surmised that stakeholder perspectives might be similar across stakeholder groups. This hypothesis offered that similarities in stakeholder perspectives could be attributed to the longevity of efforts to end homelessness and/or advocate for the homeless, which some stakeholders suggested began in the 1960's in the City of Portland and the broader community of Multnomah County. Rich et al (2001) suggest that stakeholders perceive collaborative efforts to be strongest, during the early phases of an initiative. The hypothesis mentioned here does not contest the findings of Rich et al (2001), but



speaks to the perhaps more enduring benefits of initiatives that- in the eyes of stakeholders- involve a high level of collaboration at the outset.

### Chapter 3: Research Setting and Methods

First, this chapter will explore the setting in which this research took place. Second, the study's sample and procedures for data collection will be described. Last, the approach to analysis will be described.

**Setting: Collaborative Efforts to End Homelessness in Portland & Multnomah County, Oregon**  
There are several organizing bodies that have emerged and evolved to support collaborative efforts to end homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah County (see Figure 1). "From 2004-2006, the Citizen's Commission to End Homelessness oversaw the launch [of] the City and County's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness" ("Home Again Commission", 2008)<sup>4</sup>. This group was integral in ensuring plan development was collaborative and informed. In October of 2007, the Home Again Commission convened intending to provide a forum for "...community leaders to use their experience to provide oversight" to the implementation phase "...of the 10-year plan" ("Home Again Commission", 2008). Those participating on the commission represent leadership from all sectors. Additionally, it "...assists in leveraging private resources for...efforts to end homelessness and engaging the community in this issue" ("Home Again Commission", 2008).

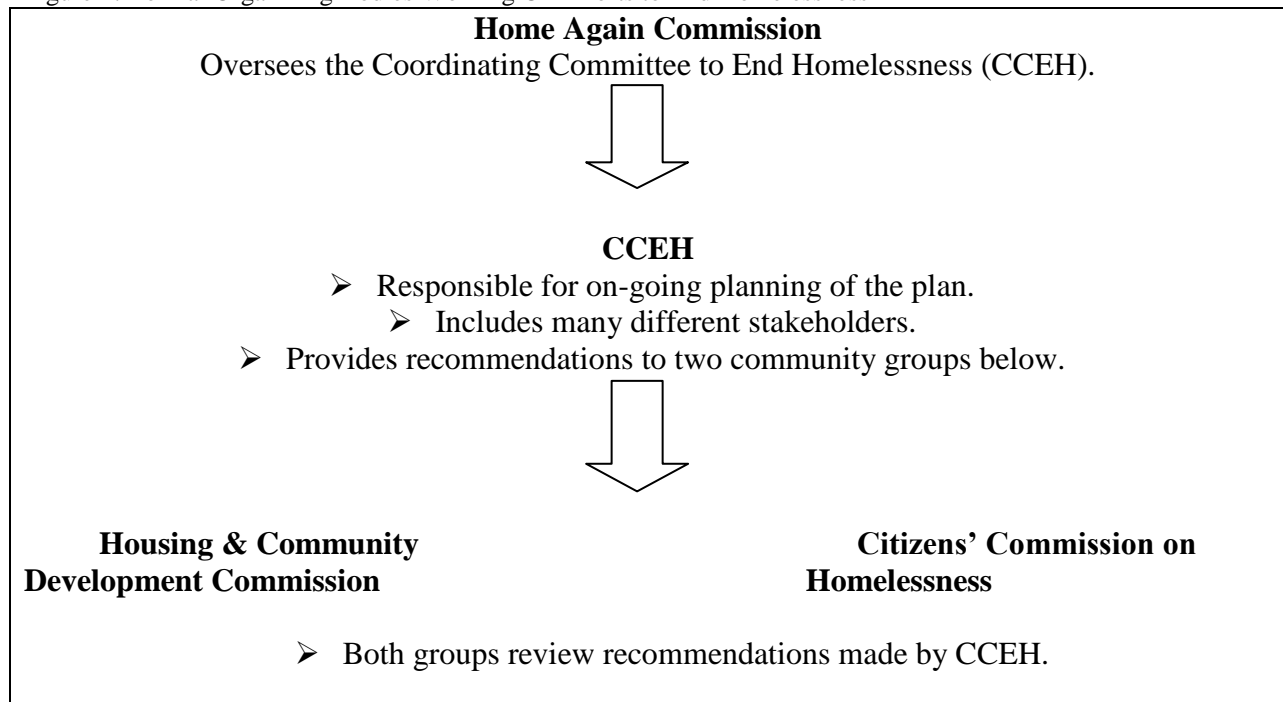
The Home Again Commission provides oversight to the Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness (CCEH) which is responsible for "...ongoing community planning" to end homelessness in conjunction with the 10-year plan ("Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness", 2005). The CCEH has three main functions: 1) to provide "...broad-based feedback on implementation issues", 2) update the "10-year Plan document over time" so it remains relevant and 3) develop "strategies for ending homelessness that are incorporated into the Continuum of Care<sup>5</sup> plan" ("Coordinating Committee to end Homelessness, 2005). The CCEH is composed of participants "from various interest groups, networks, commissions, and planning efforts" ("Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness", 2005). The recommendations put forth by the CCEH regarding the 10-year plan are reviewed by two citizen bodies: the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) & the Citizens Commission on Homelessness (CCOH) mentioned earlier. HCDC serves as the local housing advisory board and the CCOH focuses on the progress of the 10-year plan. *It appears that Portland/ Multnomah County has a sophisticated collaborative network working to end homelessness.*

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<sup>4</sup> For a concise history of efforts in Portland/ Multnomah County to end homelessness see information in the bibliography for "Action Plan"; pages 4-9 are most relevant.

<sup>5</sup> Continuum of Care describes HUD funding which requires communities demonstrate collaborative interagency efforts to end chronic homelessness.

Figure 1. Formal Organizing Bodies Working On Efforts to End Homelessness



The goal of the 10-year Plan in Portland and Multnomah County is to end homelessness by 2015. The vision of the plan is to change the institutions and systems that currently move people in and out of homelessness to serve the role of moving people into permanent housing, or support people in maintaining permanent housing. The 10-year plan is based on three principles.

- Emphasize ending chronic homelessness<sup>6</sup>, because this represents the most costly<sup>7</sup> form of homelessness.
- Streamline access to existing services to prevent/ reduce other homelessness.
- Concentrate resources on programs that offer measurable results (Erickson, 2007).

Beyond these efforts, advocacy organizations have engaged currently and recently homeless people to seek input related to ending homelessness in the community (“Sisters of the Road”, 2004). The Homeless Working Group (2004) compiled and analyzed input from 105 conversations with neighborhood associations, nonprofits, business organizations and school groups about homelessness. Their goal was to support education through conversation to build political will to end homelessness in Portland. The various groups working to end homelessness demonstrate the broad base of support<sup>8</sup> for such efforts. This research on collaborative capacity

<sup>6</sup> The Department of Housing and Urban Development states, “In general, a chronically homeless person is an unaccompanied [single and without minors] disabled individual [adult] who has been homeless for over one year”(“Chronic Homelessness”). Burt et al (2004) defines those considered chronically homeless as,

“...being disabled and either being continuously homeless for a year or more or having had at least four homeless episodes during the last three years. This definition...corresponds to the definition...adopted by the Interagency Council on Homelessness [in 2004]. Disabilities or disabling conditions often include severe and persistent mental illness, severe and persistent alcohol and/or drug abuse problems, and HIV/ AIDS” (“Executive Summary”).

<sup>7</sup> Costly” refers to the “bottom line” in hospital utilization, use of the criminal justice system, as well as degrading the quality of life for the community and individual.

<sup>8</sup> The environment in which such goals are being posed did not occur in a vacuum. While the importance of the political climate in shaping policy as well as the feasibility of interventions has been implied, it will be discussed briefly here to demonstrate the importance of the political environment. Nelson and Khadduri (1992), policy analysts for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development examined trends in

and the 10-year Plan in Portland/ Multnomah County has the potential to support the creation of more effective policy and collaborative efforts to address housing and homelessness in this urban center and other urban settings as well. It should be a valuable addition to the literature on poverty reduction and collaboration.

### *Sample*

The study's universe includes stakeholders involved in efforts to end homelessness in the City of Portland and Multnomah County, Oregon. The sample (see Table 1 for a summary) includes 20 informants from five broad categories:

- Representatives from local nonprofits/ advocacy organizations in Portland.
- Representatives (staff) from the city of Portland.
- Elected Officials from Portland.
- Representatives (staff) from Multnomah County government.
- Elected Officials from Multnomah County government.

Participants represent nine nonprofits. The category "City of Portland Staff" includes one former and one current staff for the Bureau of Housing and Community Development and staff from the Portland Development Commission, Police Bureau and the Housing Authority of Portland.

Several current and former elected officials from the City and County, as well as their staff were interviewed. While in total 20 people were interviewed, two participants were counted in two categories, because their career involvement in efforts to end homelessness was in more than one stakeholder category. (This is denoted by the \* as seen below and throughout the findings as illustrated by charts. Therefore, tables illustrating findings will show both the number of respondents for a question and the total of unduplicated respondents). Together these participants provide strong representation of the universe of people involved in efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County from both the nonprofit and public sectors.

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interventions that are targeted towards those poor who could be considered more well off (for example, those who may be able to purchase a home with assistance) in contrast to those who are more severely poor. The authors argued that the more severely poor, particularly families with children are the people to whom rental and home ownership programs (the initiatives emphasized during the 1990's) should be directed (4).

Stegman (1992) responded to the commentary of Nelson and Khadduri (1992) with a critique of their recommendations. He describes that the recommendations offered by Nelson and Khadduri reject "the view held by many political analysts that the 1990 Affordable Housing Act (the Act serves to transfer federal money to states and local government for housing production and rehabilitation for renters and low-income owners) had to address the unmet housing problems of low-and moderate-income families in order to win the vote..." (57). In Stegman's opinion, "...they misjudge the political environment" (57). To support this claim, he references the 1991 Conference of Mayors report which describes the mayoral assessment of constituents' views of homeless community members in: New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, St. Paul, Alexandria, VA and Kansas City. In "New York City: "The general public is becoming less tolerant of homeless mentally ill persons when seen in public areas" (58). Similarly, in "Los Angeles: There is less sympathy for the homeless mentally ill specifically and a breakdown of health and social services" (58). The debate between Stegman and Nelson is highlighted here to underscore the importance of the political climate in which interventions are proposed; this climate defines what is viable in a given community and what is not.

Table 1. Summary of Study Sample

	#	Interview Details
<b>Nonprofits</b>	9	5 Executive Directors, 1 organizer, 1 Sr. Program Manager, 1 Special Project Manager-Faith Based, 1 Housing Consultant  *1 current nonprofit staff person formerly worked for the City of Portland and is counted in both categories.
<b>City of Portland Staff</b>	5	1 Housing Authority of Portland, 1 Portland Police Bureau, 1 Portland Development Commission, 2 Bureau of Housing & Community Development ( one current and one former)  *1 is a former City of Portland staff person who now works for a nonprofit, therefore this interviewee is counted in both categories. *1 currently works for the PDC, but formerly worked as a staff person for a City of Portland EO and is counted in that category as well.
<b>City of Portland Elected Official (EO)</b>	2	2 former Elected Officials
<b>City of Portland EO Staff</b>	3	1 current 2 former staff for Elected Officials  *1 former staff for an elected official now works for the PDC and is counted in that category as well.
<b>Multnomah County EO</b>	2	2 current Elected Officials
<b>Multnomah County EO Staff</b>	1	1 current
<b>Total Aggregate</b>	<b>22</b>	
<b>Total Unduplicated</b>	<b>20</b>	

### *Procedures for Data Collection*

Using the purposive sample described above, open-ended key informant interviews were performed (see Appendix 1). An introductory e-mail requested an interview with the participant to last no longer than 45 minutes of their time (see Appendix 2). Often, a follow-up call to schedule an interview was necessary. If the person agreed to a meeting, they were sent the interview questions ahead of time. Time permitting, the open-ended questions, which addressed key issue areas were asked of each key informant by telephone (19/20) and, in one case, in-person. Appendix 2 includes a copy of the e-mail correspondence and the interview schedule is included as well (see Appendix 3). Extensive notes were taken during the interview. Afterwards, notes on the interview were typed-up. Follow-up questions needed for clarification were e-mailed to participants and then integrated into the interview notes.

Respondents' names have been kept confidential. Each participant received an identifying number in the corresponding notes. Some participants did not elect to remain anonymous, however for continuity in the presentation of data and analysis, participants names are not used.

Interviews emphasized three areas. First, they examined the stakeholders' perception of how elements of the community operated as *inputs* to the collaborative process. The operating definition of inputs for the purpose of this research relates to any element or variable in the community (tangible or intangible) which has either supported or obstructed historic efforts to end homelessness. Second, participants were asked about their sense of the effects of the 10-year Plan as *outcomes*. For the purpose of this research, outcomes are defined as stakeholder perceptions of the ways the 10-year plan impacted (positively or negatively) and strengthened, or weakened their efforts to end homelessness. Last, the interviews addressed the informant's aspirations for *future* efforts to end homelessness.

### *Measures & Analytic Approach*

Measures are qualitative in nature, although quantitative data is represented. That is, because the data collection method was open-ended key informant interviews, the quantitative data cannot be seen as generalizable.

Questions addressing inputs include:

- In your community what do you see as facilitating long-term solutions to ending homelessness?
- Have there been catalytic events, leaders, or policies that have fostered collaborative efforts to end homelessness? How have they done this?

Questions addressing outcomes include:

- Has the ten-year plan **strengthened** collaborative efforts to end homelessness? How and why, or why not? What was the role and impact?
- **Alternatively**, in your opinion did the **already existing collaborations** to end homelessness support an environment in which the 10-year plan would be successfully developed and implemented?

Questions involving the future include:

- How do you think collaborative efforts to end homelessness could be **improved**?

Once the data were collected, I examined trends to identify how stakeholders perceive local initiatives to end homelessness and the variables that make them successful (or unsuccessful). First, I identified themes in responses given by all the respondents, across all the stakeholder categories. Second, I reviewed responses for people across and within stakeholder categories to see to what extent they were similar and different. The working hypothesis for this research has been that shared perspectives on the issues are common, because of their historic importance in the community. For some stakeholders and the community at large, this history spans from 20-40 years.

## Chapter 4: Results & Analysis

Results and analysis will first address stakeholder views of their efforts to end homelessness and their personal working definition of collaboration. Second, this analysis will address “*inputs*,” or elements in the environment that have supported or obstructed efforts to end homelessness. These include: how prior efforts to end homelessness impact current conditions and stakeholder involvement, how pre-existing efforts supported an environment in which there would be positive outcomes from the 10-year Plan, elements that have facilitated, or been catalytic to, efforts to end homelessness and last, elements that have obstructed those efforts. Third, stakeholder perspectives of the impact, or *outcomes* of the 10-year plan will be examined. This section will explore how the Plan has strengthened efforts and how the plan has impacted who is involved in those efforts. Fourth, this analysis will look at data collected from stakeholders regarding what is needed to strengthen efforts to end homelessness as we move in to the future. Fifth, issues that stakeholders personally emphasized will be considered and last, stakeholders’ perspectives of the basic assumption this research makes will be addressed.

### Stakeholder Identification

In this section stakeholders’ perceptions of their roles regarding efforts to end homelessness are analyzed. Additionally, stakeholders’ personal definitions of collaboration are discussed and related to the literature.

#### Part One: Roles in Ending Homelessness.

The first question asked of respondents addressed their *role in efforts to end homelessness* in Portland and Multnomah County, including their participation in the 10-year Plan and any other efforts. Although not the source of this study’s richest findings, this question was essential to understand how stakeholders perceive their position or role related to the issue. Respondents could indicate more than one type of involvement. Table 2 summarizes the descriptions of involvement for each group of stakeholders.

Table 2. Roles in Ending Homelessness

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Involved in 2+ways.	6	4	2	2	2	1	17
Participate in Group Efforts.	6	3	2	2	2	1	16
Speak on individual behalf.	4	4	2	3	2	1	16
Speak on behalf of entity for which they work.	4	0	0	1	0	0	5
Direct Service	5	2	0	0	0	0	7
Funding	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated.

The data illustrates a high level of commitment to stakeholder efforts to end homelessness across stakeholder categories. Seventeen of the 20 mention two or more ways they are currently involved, or have been over time. Findings also demonstrate a high level of communication and

organization among stakeholders, as 16 out of 20 mentioned being a part of a group that organizes or consults with others in their efforts to end homelessness. These findings appear across all stakeholder categories.

A high number of interviewees (15 out of 20) responded to this question by describing specific actions they *personally* have been involved in. As observed in Table 2, this response is seen widely across stakeholder categories. However, 5 out 20 respondents clarified that the response given for this question did not describe actions s/he had taken alone, but represented the collective efforts of the entire entity for which they were just one representative. Interestingly, 4 of the 5 people who responded in this manner were nonprofit staff. One could conjecture that this c relates to the collective, mission-driven spirit of nonprofits. In other words, this finding suggests that nonprofit staff identify so thoroughly with the specific agency mission that they are more likely attribute their efforts to the group (entire agency) participating in the “cause” or mission.

Over 1/3 (7 out of 20) of respondents identify direct service involvement as a part of their efforts to end homelessness. All of these respondents worked for nonprofits, or were city of Portland staff. These findings make sense as it is unlikely that elected officials and staff for elected officials are involved professionally in direct service. Three respondents also described their role as related to funding in some way. All three of these respondents were nonprofit staff people; they mentioned:

- Ways funding does not impact the integrity of their product.
- How funding has directly served the mission to end homelessness.
- Participating in community efforts to apply for McKinney Grant funding.

Overall, responses point to a high level of organization and communication. Respondents reported involvement in a wide range of activities. They oversee agencies that provide, fund, or otherwise support direct service, or the provision of housing. In addition, participants actively worked on securing funding for their agencies’ and the broader community. Last, they have occupied spots on numerous committees over the years and participated in large-scale overhauls of human services provided between the City, County and community nonprofit agencies. This spectrum of involvement could be seen as evidence of maturity in their joint efforts to end homelessness.

## Part Two: Personal Definitions of Collaboration

The second question respondents addressed related to their *personal definition of collaboration* in the context of efforts to end homelessness in the community. It was important to establish the interviewees’ working definition as many questions pertained to collaborative efforts. Findings here are categorized in terms of components which arose repeatedly (who is involved, what do they do and what is the nature of collaboration).

### Operational Definitions of Collaboration

It is helpful to revisit the literature to understand the categories used in this section. Wood and Gray’s (1991) definition describes *who* is involved in collaboration as, “...autonomous stakeholders of a [shared] problem domain”(146). He also describes *what* (in Table 3 below “what” is described as “action” or “process”) these stakeholders do which qualifies their



activities as collaboration; they “engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to the domain”(146).

Wood and Gray’s (1991) discussion of collaboration and environmental complexity describes the intended *outcomes* of collaboration “...organizations collaborate to reduce and control environmental uncertainty and turbulence” (155). Their discussion also describes the intangible *nature* of collaboration describing that while collaboration may increase predictability in the desired ways, it may also increase complexity in the environment or community (155).

Julian (1994) simply describes *who* is involved in collaboration as “multiple stakeholders”(4). In terms of *what* collaboration is operationally, Julian (1994) describes, a “...process through which multiple stakeholders identify a common mission, allocate resources, and engage in activities designed to achieve that mission” (4).

Selin and Chavez (1995) describe “stakeholders” as *who* is involved in collaboration which *is* composed of “techniques [that] emphasize sustained dialogue between them”(190). The intended *outcome* is the resolution of “...differences and [the] advance[ment of] a shared vision of the future...” (190). Reflecting more philosophically, Selin and Chavez (1995) state that the *nature* of collaboration is process oriented and “tailored to... [the] unique demands of [the] situation rather than using the same approach for all issues” (190). Rich et al (2001) also described the nature of collaboration as defined by academics as “...typically include[ing] a power-sharing relationship between partners” (198).

Table 3. Stakeholder Definitions of Collaboration

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Actions, Process, Outcomes.	9	4	2	3	1	0	19* (17)
Include 2+ aspects (who, what, nature).	4	3	2	2	1	0	12
Include 1 aspect (who, what, nature).	5	1	0	1	1	1	9* (8)
Include “who” in definition.	5	3	2	1*	1	0	12* (11)
Definition discusses “nature”.	1	2	1	0	0	1	5
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or no denotation.

### Respondents’ Definitions of Collaboration

The large majority of respondents (17 out of 20) address the actions, processes and anticipated outcomes that define collaborative efforts. This points to evidence that at least “off the cuff,” interviewees shared a similar working definition of collaboration. Of the 3 respondents who did

not mention these aspects in their definition, they represent: 1 City of Portland staff, 1 Multnomah County Elected Official and 1 staff to a Multnomah County Elected Official. Perhaps the perspective of City and nonprofit staff (who is more likely to be in closer contact with direct service) is more action oriented than that of those who work for the County. However, because of the limited size of the sample, this is difficult to ascertain.

Over half of respondents (12 out of 20) mentioned 2 or more of the following aspects in their definitions: who is involved in collaborative efforts to end homelessness, what they do in collaborating, and the nature of collaboration. Less than half (8 out of 20) respondents only mentioned one aspect of collaboration (who, what, nature) in their definition. These more limited responses came largely from staff at nonprofits and the County. However, given the small sample size, it is difficult to discern the significance of this.

One former City elected official described that collaboration is, “Getting anyone with any interest around the table and seeing where it can go.” In a true partnership, one entity would say, “We won’t move forward, unless you move forward.” A former City staff person who is currently working for a nonprofit described collaboration as a “big tent” that includes “strategic partnerships.” S/he said you can have “committee representation, ground rules... formalize the shit out of committees and commissions... but ultimately that is not what will make the collaborative process effective.” Later in the interview, s/he said for collaboration to work, “it is the stakeholders’ responsibility to represent the population for which they work and be open to the collaborative process.” Additionally, the person who is running the process has the responsibility of making it a “good process” by respecting the stakeholders and therein “keeping their ‘covenant’ with stakeholders. Interestingly, one respondent who was a former nonprofit staff person defined collaboration as “change[ing] the position of your adversaries.” This was the most charged and perhaps combative sense of collaboration given by interviewees.

Again, over half of respondents (11/20) addressed who is involved in collaboration to define the term. Given the number of respondents to this question, this shows a wide distribution of this basic sense of the term. One-quarter (5 out of 20) of interviewees gave more philosophical responses, which addressed the “nature” of collaboration. Although this kind of response was less common than others, it emerged across all categories with the exception of Elected Officials.

For instance, one nonprofit executive director said collaboration was “...bringing institutions and individuals representing institutions together to identify the capacity they have, their respective interests in issues and ways to integrate their skills and resources to bring them closer to their shared objectives.” S/he furthered that it is by “...learning through the process” in which a narrow focus is “broadened by their participation.” A County staff person for an elected official said that collaboration exists “...on a continuum from coordination to ensure that there is no overlap [in service provision] to collaboration, to “true partnership” which cannot be reached without “integration”... mutual risk taking, resource sharing and joint decision making.”

### Summary

Overall, respondents seemed to share many aspects of their personal operational definitions of collaboration. In particular, their definitions of who and what processes are involved. More

philosophical responses were thoughtful and reflective adding to the richness with which one might imagine collaborative processes to end homelessness have been approached.

## Inputs

The next series of findings address a variety of inputs, or elements in the environment impacting collaborative efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County. This section includes data regarding the respondents' perceptions of the impacts of prior efforts on current ones, as well as those stakeholders who are involved in such efforts. Additionally, it explores perceptions of elements in the environment that have facilitated or obstructed their efforts.

### Part One: How Prior Efforts Impact Current Conditions

First, the results regarding stakeholder perceptions of how *prior efforts* to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County *impact current conditions and stakeholder involvement to end homelessness* will be examined (see Table 4). This question aims to glean a sense of stakeholder perceptions of how conditions prior to the 10-year Plan's initiative affected its development and success.

Table 4. Stakeholder Views of Prior Efforts

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Concrete Efforts	4	3	2	0	2	1	*12 (11)
<i>Shelter Reconfiguration</i>	1	0	2	0	2	0	5
<i>Other</i>	3*	3*	0	0	0	1	*7(6)
Pave the way	5	2	1	0	0	0	8
<i>Nonprofits</i>	3	1	1	0	1	0	6
Political will/ leadership	1	0	1	0	1	1	4
Difficulties	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
No changes	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*19 (17)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or not denotation.

Over half of the respondents (11 out of 17), described concrete efforts that laid the groundwork for current efforts and stakeholders. Specifically, almost half of those respondents (5 out of 11) mention the *shelter reconfiguration* spearheaded under the leadership of former City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury (prior to 10 year plan). Four of those five respondents are elected or former elected officials. The other half of respondents (6 out of 11) mention *specific resources* such as money allocated to efforts, grassroots organizing skills and “believing we could make a difference.” Nonprofit staff makes up 50% of these respondents with City and County staff combined to account for the remaining 50%. These findings suggest that elected officials and their staff valued the systems overhaul spearheaded by an elected official more than

the second group described. One might postulate that this can be attributed to the work with which respondents had most exposure.

A large number of respondents (8 out of 17) made a vague reference to prior efforts “paving the way.” Many people mentioned a strong core to community efforts, or the “same old guard” which has been working on the issue for around 20 years. It is possible that this points to the longevity of efforts in the community and a shared sense of respect for those efforts. Of these respondents 5 out of 8 are nonprofit staff. This may demonstrate a particular value to the historicity of efforts within the nonprofit culture in the field. It follows that over 1/3 of the respondents (6 out of 17) noted the strength of the nonprofit industry historically as an element which influences current efforts to end homelessness and the people involved in those efforts. This finding suggests that this is a shared narrative, which a range of people see as important. Additionally, many of these respondents are not new to local efforts to end homelessness and therefore their perspectives reflect a sense of valuing the historical view of the work that they have accomplished.

A smaller number of respondents (4 out of 18) explicitly mentioned political will/ leadership as an element that influences current efforts to end homelessness and the people involved in those efforts. Stakeholders described the need for elected officials to lead, or champion the initiative. They described the importance of this as a way to both reach and represent the general public. Additionally, stakeholders described the importance of the role of the elected official in funneling resources needed to adequately address the issue. Three out of four of these respondents were elected officials or staff for elected officials. These findings suggest that elected officials are perhaps more attuned to the political perspective.

A small number of respondents (3 out of 17) mentioned the more difficult aspects of collaborative efforts to end homelessness prior to the 10-year plan. Two (of three) of these respondents were nonprofit staff. One stated that efforts “... [were] not always collaborative...” and “...famil[y providers] were less organized than the singles providers in the past...[providers for single adults] had it easier.” The small number represented here may suggest that people are less likely to discuss negative aspects of their organizing efforts; people may be resistant to “stir the pot.”

One respondent (out of 17) mentioned that they have “always had” their current strengths, which suggests that not much has changed over the past 20 years. This data was anomalous in a sea of findings which otherwise suggest a dynamic history.

### Summary

In summary, the study’s findings suggest that stakeholders are likely to emphasize the value of efforts with which they are most intimately involved. This is illustrated in a few ways. First, the data collected from elected officials and their staff regarding the shelter reconfiguration and their perspectives about the emphasis of the importance of political leadership. While a preponderance of nonprofit staff demonstrate valuing the historical efforts made compared to other stakeholder categories, most stakeholders share a sense that the nonprofit industry has been integral to efforts to end homelessness. In closing, people are less likely to “stir the pot” than

discuss their strengths. This may be because the interviewer is an unknown “outsider” and it may also be that this strengths-based perspective contributes positively to their efforts.

## Part Two: The Impact of Pre-Existing Efforts on Outcomes of the 10-year Plan

In a similar question, participants were asked if they felt that *pre-existing efforts* to end homelessness *supported the positive outcomes of the 10-year Plan*. Responses are summarized in Table 5. Almost 1/3 of respondents (5 out of 17) made a straightforward affirmation that prior efforts impacted the environment positively.

Table 5. Impact of Prior Efforts on Plan Outcomes

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Affirmed	0	2	1	0	1	1	5
Nonprofits	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
Systems improvements	1	0	2	1	0	0	4
Culture & history	2	1	1	0	0	0	4
Did not answer.	1	2	0	0	0	0	2
Political will.	2*	1*	0	0	0	0	*3(2)
Creative bureaucracy.	1*	1*	0	0	0	0	*2(1)
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>8*</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*19 (17)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or no denotation.

These five respondents represent two elected officials, a staff person for an elected official from Multnomah County and two staff for the City of Portland. One elected official from Multnomah County said, “We did this work, before the plan.” Another former elected official from the City of Portland said, “It’s the same people and the same thinking.” This response echoes the strength of the finding from the previous question<sup>9</sup> that stakeholders view prior efforts as “paving the way.” Notably, more nonprofit staff responded to the previous question, which emphasized how prior efforts impact current efforts and stakeholders. Many stakeholders responding to the latter question specifically addressing the impacts of the 10-year Plan are elected officials, their staff, or city staff. These results offer evidence that leaders in the nonprofit sector have a strong sense of their historic context, while elected officials and their staff may give more attention to how initiatives will impact their community.

Again, participants (4 out of 17) indicated that the nonprofit sector is an element that supported the Plan’s success. This response was given by two nonprofit staff people, a staff person from the City of Portland and a former elected official from the City of Portland. This finding coupled

<sup>9</sup> A large number of respondents (8 out of 17) made a vague reference to prior efforts “paving the way.” Many people mentioned a strong core to community efforts, or the “same old guard” which has been working on the issue for around 20 years. It is possible that this points to the longevity of efforts in the community and a shared sense of respect for those efforts. Of respondents 5 out of 8 are nonprofit staff. This suggests a particular value to the historicity of efforts within the nonprofit culture in the field.

with a similar finding from the previous question<sup>10</sup> demonstrates the widely valued importance of the work nonprofits in the community have done historically.

Paralleling responses to the previous question,<sup>11</sup> 4 out of 17 respondents related that strategic systems restructuring pertaining to ending homelessness prepared the community to successfully implement the plan. Two of those respondents were former elected officials for the City, one was a former staff person for an elected official at the City and one was a nonprofit staff person. Two responses reference specific strategic community wide systems overhauls. One respondent described the shelter reconfiguration and one described the 1991 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy that was "...used as a basis to complete an extensive Portland Planning Process around all Affordable Housing." Again, elected officials and their staff predominantly mention the emphasis on wide-scale systems restructuring.

Other responses (4 out of 17) described aspects of a culture and history that created a fertile environment for the Plan's implementation. Two respondents were nonprofit staff, one a staff person for the City and one a former elected official for the city. One nonprofit staff person described the environment as "collaborative." Another participant, a staff person for the city said, "It had a grassroots element, there were "believers" at all levels." Last, a former elected official from the city said "Organizing was easy, because we had been collaborating for the past 40 years." Together, these comments capture the longevity of community efforts and the collective character of those efforts.

Three out of 17 respondents discussed other issues and/or did not directly answer the question. One nonprofit staff described what the *Plan achieved for family providers*. "Before the Plan...", she stated, "...there was no plan for homeless families, while three comprehensive plans had been developed since the 1980s for singles."

Another respondent, a staff person at the City mentioned that along with the benefits of shared history it endows stakeholders with "*baggage*" as well; people stop trusting the bureaucratic system. Another City staff person described that "...not much has changed." These responses appear to reflect what is foremost on certain stakeholders' minds (ranging from their constituencies to perhaps wrapping up the interview quickly).

A couple of respondents (2 out of 17) mentioned *political will*. Respondents described the need for "leadership" and "funneling resources." Last, one nonprofit staff person, a former staff person at the City described the need for "*creative bureaucracy*." This statement, while enigmatic, became an emergent theme throughout other interviews, which emphasized the importance of "innovation."

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<sup>10</sup> Almost half of the respondents (6 out of 17) noted the strength of the nonprofit industry historically as an element which influences current efforts to end homelessness and the people involved in those efforts. This finding suggests that this is a shared narrative, which a range of people see as important.

<sup>11</sup> Over half of respondents (11 out of 17), describe concrete efforts, which laid the groundwork for current efforts and stakeholders. Specifically, almost half of those respondents (5 out of 11) mention the *shelter reconfiguration* spearheaded under the leadership of Gretchen Kafoury (prior to 10 year plan). Four of those five respondents are elected or former elected officials.

## Summary

Generally, responses to this question present a wider spectrum of themes, with less of a concentration in views seen in previously asked questions. Findings from previous questions are reinforced here. Possible systematic differences between stakeholders in the nonprofit sector and elected officials, as well as their staff are apparent. Nonprofit staff was more responsive to the prior question that referenced prior efforts, whereas elected officials and their staff was more attuned to this question that asked stakeholders to address the plan specifically. Other themes are emergent as well, the historic work of nonprofits is valued by a variety of stakeholder and elected officials and their staff seem more focused on systems change than others. Last, findings point to these efforts as long term within the community and also, to that which is foremost on the minds of stakeholders.

## Part Three: The Influence of Contextual Factors

The following findings summarize the combined data from two questions. One question asked about “*elements*” in the community *that have supported efforts* to end homelessness and the other asked about “*catalytic*” *events leaders, or policies*. The question attempted to capture respondents’ perceptions of variables that have strengthened efforts to end homelessness. Table 6 summarizes these responses.

### How Prior Research on Collaboration Relates to Findings

Rich et al (2001) researched variables that support or “impose barriers”(185) to collaborative efforts between community based organizations (CBO) and city governments to reduce poverty. This is relevant as it relates to this study’s examination of a specific anti-poverty initiative and the collaborative efforts by which it was developed, implemented and its progress is currently monitored. The results of Rich et al’s (2001) study suggest that the relationship between the CBO and city government may be affected by the “phase of the initiative”(191). Specifically, collaboration is “judged to be the highest in the early phases...such as identifying community needs” (191). Based on this finding, we might expect the collaborative energy first generated by the Plan to be waning. Notably, only one participant stated that it seemed the apex of collaborative capacity had been reached and is now in decline. However, this sentiment is implicit in perceptions that will be explored further in this section.

Pertaining to the *benefits of collaboration*, respondents of Rich et al’s (2001) study saw “...collaborations yielding substantial benefits” such as improving city governments’ “...understanding of community issues” by which they are “able to design and implement programs that better fit community needs”(197). Undoubtedly, the majority of participants in this study’s research reflect this sentiment.

In Burt et al’s (2007) study, the key elements found in successful community-wide homelessness prevention strategies are examined. The first set of elements Burt et al (2007) describe in their findings are largely related to wide-scale systems including, “...mechanisms for accurate targeting [of those most vulnerable to homelessness], a high level of jurisdictional commitment, significant mainstream agency involvement, and mechanisms for continuous system improvement” (213).

The second set of elements described as key elements to effective collaboration in their findings relate to what Burt et al describes as “community organization” and includes three characteristics,

- *Community motivation*- “...community accepts an obligation to shelter one or more at-risk population...the jurisdiction accepts that it must provide funds to fulfill it...”
- *Maximize resources*- “Collaboration among public and private agencies helps stretch resources and creates new resources...that did not previously exist” (221).
- *Leadership*- “...is essential at two levels: agency heads and public figures must commit to developing and sustaining a community-wide prevention strategy” (221).

All of the elements described in Burt et al’s (2007) study emerged as important to stakeholders for this research as well.

## Findings

Table 6. Influence of Contextual Factors

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Individual leader	8	2	1	3	2	1	17
Events	3	1	1	1	1	1	8
Policy Tools	3	0	2	1	1	0	7
Culture	3	1*	1	1*	1	1	8(7)
Resources	2	2	0	1	0	0	5
Broaden Stakeholder-base	3	1*	0	1	1	0	6 (5)
BHCD	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Believing	2	1	1	0	0	1	5
Stress	1	2*	0	2*(1)	0	0	5 (4)
Historical Context	0	1*	1	2*(1)	0	1	4(3)
Innovation	1	2*	0	1*	0	0	3
Nonprofits	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>9*</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or no denotation.

Over ¾ of respondents (16 out of 20) describe individual leaders as important. Respondents clarified that individual leadership has been important in a variety of capacities: to unite the City and County, for political leadership and providing a “strong champion.” One nonprofit staff person said that the lead staff from the City was integral in ensuring that family providers and singles providers did not polarize themselves from one another. These findings demonstrate a strong sense among interviewees of the power of an individual’s (or many) leadership skills in pushing the agenda to end homelessness forward. It also illustrates a variety of levels in which different qualities of leadership are necessary for an initiative’s progress. For the elected official who is a part of the collaborative, or supporting it, their leadership is needed to promote the initiative among their constituents, as well as represent the values and desires of constituents. Beyond this, the elected official is in a powerful and unique position to be able to be a “broker” for the initiative. Additionally, as mentioned above, stakeholders viewed leadership from a staff



person at the City as crucial to their efforts. This staff person's leadership was described by stakeholders as his/her innovative thinking and sensitive facilitation of meetings that established the foundation for the collaboration. Last, stakeholders described leaders of nonprofits and advocacy organizations as capturing the ear of elected officials and keeping the issue present to the general public, as one about which, they should be concerned.

A smaller number of respondents (4 out of 18) explicitly mentioned political will/ leadership as an element that influences current efforts to end homelessness and the people involved in those efforts. Stakeholders described the need for elected officials to lead, or champion the initiative. They described the importance of this as a way to both reach and represent the general public. Additionally, stakeholders described the importance of the role of the elected official in funneling resources needed to adequately address the issue. Three out of four of these respondents were elected officials or staff for elected officials. These findings suggest that elected officials are perhaps more attuned to the political perspective as observed in other findings as well.

More than 1/3 (8 out of 20) of respondents mentioned a particular event as a catalyst facilitating their efforts. Events described by stakeholders include: Homeless Connect, political action and the One-Night Homeless Count. Those mentioning the role of "events" represent all stakeholder categories.

Over 1/3 (7 out of 20) of respondents described important policy tools, which have facilitated efforts to end homelessness. Stakeholders mentioned the 10-year plan as a policy tool, which supported momentum. A former elected official for the City mentioned the importance of local efforts to change the federal HUD definition of chronic homelessness, so it could better meet the needs of the community (families and children in particular). On a statewide level, one respondent mentioned the Oregon Housing Trust Fund created by legislature in 1991. S/he also mentioned the Oregon Lenders' Tax Credit, "which enables an Oregon lending institution to take a tax credit for decreasing the interest on permanent financing for qualified affordable housing project up to 4%." On a local level, many stakeholders mentioned the importance of the City's policy of no net loss to affordable housing within its boundaries, 30% of tax increment funds allotted to ensuring affordable housing and previous plans to end homelessness championed by the former Mayor Bud Clark. Respondents represent three nonprofit staff people, two former elected officials for the City, 1 former staff person for a City elected official and a Multnomah County elected official. This offers evidence that stakeholders from a variety of posts view policy tools that offer infrastructure to their efforts as important.

Another interesting finding is that 1/5 (4 out of 20) respondents mentioned the role of some unknown critical threshold of "stress" being reached to "cause change." One former staff person for City elected official stated that the advocacy and resources provided by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (the City received a large grant for its efforts combined with "...a growing awareness that we were not making significant progress with the chronically homeless... [who were] most visible to the business community" created a context for change. A current City staff person said simply, "Stress causes change." Offering anecdotal evidence of this, former nonprofit staff person describes political action taken that "...precipitated a crisis really..." helping stakeholders "...realize the need for a new conversation." Similarly, a current staff person for a City elected official describes the winter storms as, "...raising the awareness of the

community.” Two City staff, one former staff for an elected official at the City and one nonprofit staff person mentioned this idea, which suggests that these stakeholders acknowledge the role of “agitation” in the change process perhaps more (or more openly) than elected officials.

The historical context, which has shaped the pervasiveness of homelessness in the United States and local efforts, were mentioned by 1/5 of respondents (4 out of 20). Notably, this response was given by City and County level staff and elected, but not nonprofit staff. A former staff person for an elected official mentioned the “rich tradition of elected officials who have embraced the challenge of addressing homelessness...” since the late 1980s . A former elected official mentioned three “cataclysmic” events. First, the “75% cut to federal housing assistance [with Reagan].” Second, “the poor reintegration of Vietnam Vets” after the war. Last, the “deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill from Oregon hospitals” which she voted in to State legislation in 1979 “unfortunately.”

Several participants (3 out of 20) noted the importance of “innovation” in leadership and services provided. These responses echo the former City staff who described “creativity as important to efforts, even among bureaucrats<sup>12</sup>. Stakeholders emphasize the importance of innovation in relationship to services and leadership. Similar to earlier findings, two respondents mentioned the work of nonprofits as supporting efforts to end homelessness. There were three “outlier” responses to this question. One respondent described financial resources with which “grandiose” efforts were made to end homelessness on the part of the City. No other respondents characterized financial resources with which to address the issue of homelessness as negative. Another respondent responded to the prompt to describe community elements that were “catalytic” or facilitated efforts to end homelessness by describing “cataclysmic events” that have created homelessness. Last, one interviewee described “expectations from funders” as positively impacted efforts to end homelessness, by creating incentives to produce measureable outcomes.

### Summary

These findings demonstrate the wide range of ways stakeholders view elements in the community as supporting their efforts to end homelessness. First, they reveal the sense shared by interviewees of the importance of individual leaders who have championed their efforts. Second, all stakeholder groups described the rallying importance of “events” that generate energy in the community. Third, most stakeholder groups mentioned important policies that have been implemented, which have been helpful. Fourth, many stakeholders describe a shared sense of concern about the issue which may be representative of a maturity of consciousness cultivated over a period of time. Other issues raised were resources, a growing stakeholder base, believing, historic events, innovation and the work of nonprofits.

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<sup>12</sup> Last, one nonprofit staff person, a former staff person at the City described the need for “creative bureaucracy.” This statement, while enigmatic, became an emergent theme throughout other interviews which emphasized the importance of “innovation.”

## Part Four: Elements Obstructing Efforts

The responses discussed in this section reflect stakeholder perceptions of *what has obstructed efforts to end homelessness*. Responses are summarized in Table 7.

### How Prior Research on Collaboration Relates to Findings

Addressing potential barriers to collaborative efforts between CBOs and city governments, Rich et al (2001) describes an almost antagonistic relationship observed in their findings. CBOs largely described "...city government and the local political environment" (195) as "bureaucratic," controlling and the "primary obstacles to effective collaboration to reduce poverty" (195). City governments, however, described CBOs "with limited resources, poor administration and parochial interests as the major stumbling block" (195). The findings from this study did not illuminate the same contentious relationship Rich et al (2001) describes, but rather a relationship characterized by a generally well-rounded understanding of one another's respective positions and contributions.

### Findings

Table 7. Elements Obstructing Efforts

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Funding	4*	3*	1	3*	1	0	12(10)
Collaboration	4*	4**	0	1*	0	0	9 (7)
Local Initiative	3	1*	2	1*	0	0	7 (5)
Structural Issues	1	1	0	0	2	0	4
Historic Factors	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
Slogan	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*20(18)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated.

More than fifty percent of (10 out of 18) respondents related that a lack of funding negatively impacts their efforts. Many responses described local budget cuts to services needed to fulfill the plan occurring in tandem with an increase in the homeless population. This response reflects people from every stakeholder group with the exception of "staff for Multnomah County elected official." (However, it is important to note there was only one participant from this category).

Over one-third of participants (7 out of 18) mentioned aspects of collaboration as obstructing the process. Respondents include a large number of both nonprofit (4 out of 7 nonprofit staff who answered this question) and City staff (4 out of 5 City staff who answered this question). One city staff mentioned a variety of difficulties that arise in the collaborative process, "getting along", "giving up power" and "systems alignment." Another City staff person and former staff for a City elected official said that stakeholders with the history of those in Portland often bring "baggage" into the process.

One City staff mentioned a particular tension between the police and social workers. From this person's perspective social workers see the cops as "pigs" and cops see social workers as "out of touch." It is worth noting that a former City staff person and current nonprofit staff person described this tension, however, with a different slant. "People say they care about homelessness, but they don't care about ending it." When asked whom in particular the participant was referencing, s/he said certain members of the Police Bureau.<sup>13</sup> Other participants mentioned issues of "turf", which can impede collaborative processes. Last, one participant described that as we enter a time of economic difficulty, stakeholders such as the police will be less likely to act outside their core mission and support collaborative efforts to end homelessness. These findings suggest the incredible difficulty that accompanies collaboration when stakeholders represent disparate viewpoints on the issue being addressed.

Nearly 1/3 (5 out of 18) of participants described an absence of local initiative as muting their efforts. People described a variety of issues pertaining to the absence of local initiative, or widespread grassroots interest in the issue. Stakeholders raised skepticism about the potency of an initiative that was borne from the Bush administration. They also described that using the federal definition of chronic homelessness excludes key stakeholders and their difficulties managing this hurdle to meet the needs of their community. Last, people described needing a more significant commitment from the community that involves "actions" not just plans. All stakeholder groups with the exception of those from Multnomah County are represented in this response.

One-fifth of those interviewed (four out of twenty) described structural issues pertaining to the division of services and funding between the City and the County as impediments to their efforts. One City staff described the fractured responsibilities between the City and County. S/he described a "...break down in the division of funding [due to Resolutions A & B] for resources which are interdependent...the County controls services that have to be complemented by a resource controlled by the City, which impacts the ability to achieve goals." A nonprofit staff said their "...main impediments...are structural...the City can tackle some issues, but other issues require State and Federal Intervention." Giving an explicit example of the issue, a current elected official at the County said, "...the city serves single adults, while the county provides services to a variety of populations...the City has been proactive in building more facilities that the County would then be responsible for providing services to and the County just has not had the funding to do this." One participant described the need to improve the mental health system and the reentry of people in the criminal system back in to society. Of note, half of these respondents (2 out of 4) are elected officials from Multnomah County. At this point, it may be no surprise that this is suggestive of the idea that stakeholders find the issues which impact them directly of most relevance.

A few (3 out of 18) participants described historic factors they believe obstruct their efforts. Those mentioned by participants include: neighborhood residents resisting social

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<sup>13</sup> The participant who made the police are "pigs" and social workers are out of "touch" was critical of social workers for a similar reason, s/he suspected there was an unconscious desire to perpetuate homelessness, which relates to the nature of bureaucracy to be self-sustaining and replicate itself.

services being located in their neighborhoods. Another City staff person said, "...historically bad hires at the City and County" have gotten in the way of their work as well. A former City elected official mentioned two historic events of importance, the "treatment of Vietnam Veterans post-Vietnam and the 1979 deinstitutionalization of patients from Oregon State Hospitals."

A number of participants (3 out of 20) found the slogan "10-year plan to end homelessness" problematic. Two participants criticized it for being "unrealistic" and "untenable." One respondent described that the Plan and other efforts do not address the root causes of homelessness and this makes their efforts somewhat ineffective.

Last, another participant suggested that the intended outcomes which the original plan assumed would occur have proven to be unrealistic. S/he described two myths that the community has to be able to discuss honestly, before it can proceed effectively in efforts to end homelessness. The first myth s/he said "...is that if the plan targets the highest resources users, there will be savings that trickle down to other demographics that are less of a priority such as homeless families." The truth is that "This has not happened" because "...even if you go from 10 people on a jail block to 1, because the other 9 are receiving alternative services, the expense of serving that one person is the same as all ten." S/he furthered that "If there is a benefit from reduced use by high users, it is that people who might not have been served- otherwise- will be. The only way for the reasoning to have truth would require a complete elimination of the need for services."

Second, she said "...an assumption was made in the planning that most people would need more "service heavy" housing for 2 years or 24 months and then they would move on more or less independently to less service-laden housing. S/he said at this point, they "have not seen results which suggest this is true." They are finding that people moving into designated facilities have "challenges so significant" that they do not move on. "This produces a bottle neck" where the plan anticipated "churning people out of slots and in to self sufficiency." According to this stakeholder, this reality has not been confronted and doing so is "...politically grim to contemplate."

### Summary

In response to stakeholder perceptions of elements obstructing their efforts to end homelessness, findings demonstrate several themes across stakeholder groups. First, stakeholders across categories describe a lack of funding as impeding their efforts. Second, respondents describe difficulties with the nature of collaboration itself. Third, others mentioned a variety of manifestations representing a lack of local initiative. Fourth, several interviewees mentioned difficulties arising out of structural issues. People also mentioned local and national events, which have exacerbated homelessness in the City and County, the inadequacies of the slogan for the plan and anticipated outcomes that are not being met in reality.

## Outcomes

The next series of responses attempt to capture the stakeholder's sense of *how the 10-year Plan strengthened, or impacted collaborative efforts* to end homelessness. Findings are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8. How the Plan Strengthened Efforts

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Affirmed Positive Impact	4*	4**	1	3*	2	1	15(13)
Vague or Neutral Response	3	1	1	0	0	0	5
Housing First Model	1	1	1				3
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>8*</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*20 (18)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or no denotation.

### Part One: Stakeholders' Perceptions of the Plan's Impact

A majority of respondents (13 out of 19) affirmed that the Plan strengthened collaborative efforts to end homelessness. Participants gave a variety of descriptors such as “enforced”, while others said “yes”, but expressed uncertainty about the continued strength of the Plan into the future. A Multnomah County elected official described the merger between the Bureau of Housing and Community Development and the Portland Development Commission into one new Portland Housing Bureau as one positive outcome, which can be attributed to the Plan. Several other participants across stakeholder groups mentioned an increase in the base of people who have a “stake” in the issue. The variety of positive responses demonstrates a relative consensus among those interviewed regarding the Plan's positive impact on collaborative efforts to end homelessness.

Over one-quarter of respondents (5 out of 19) expressed vague or neutral responses. One nonprofit staff person said that it “depends” on your point of view and went on to describe perceived strides from the vantage point of providers serving “singles” as opposed to those serving families. Another nonprofit staff person said the Plan was relatively insignificant for the faith community's efforts, because there had been growing internal motivation to increase communication with others about shared desires to end homelessness. A third respondent representing a nonprofit affirmed that the plan improved collaborative efforts, but qualifies that “there was a stick,” referencing a federal HUD “requirement” for collaboration among providers for access to the Continuum of Care funding stream. This comment suggests skepticism about the depth of collaborative efforts.

Some people (3 out of 19) viewed the growth of the “housing first” model as a positive outcome they attribute to the Plan. One former City elected official said, “Absolutely. It

has been at the heart of what has been done...Housing First and Supportive Housing are the only things that work and the Plan is all about coordinating those services.” However, one nonprofit staff expressed concern that while housing first has been a “galvanizing slogan,” it has “proven to be a paradigm which is too narrow in terms of implementation.” S/he furthered that while this housing model works for some people, it is not the most appropriate intervention for all. These findings are important as they direct us to the pertinence of continued research which ensures that public funding is used to support efforts to end homelessness that have demonstrated effectiveness.

One person described the Plan as an impetus, which “finally” got family housing needs and the inequities between resource allocation to singles and families “on the map.” Another respondent described the Plan as contributing to a widespread sense of “hope” in the community.

### Summary

Respondents generally felt the Plan has impacted efforts to end homelessness positively. However, a substantial number of participants were ambivalent. People cited positive outcomes of the Plan’s implementation such as effective housing models (noting there is still research to be done and improvements to be made) and getting family housing issues, “on the map.”

### Part Two: Stakeholders’ Perceptions of the Plan’s Impact on Collaborative Capacity

The following findings respond to an interview question that asks about *how the Plan affected the stakeholders currently participating* in efforts to end homelessness. In other words, are there new people at the table? Responses are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. Plan’s Impact on Collaborative Capacity

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Broaden	5*	3**	1	3*	1	1	14 (12)
Resources	11*	1*1*	0	1*1	0	0	6 (4)
No	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>3**</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16 (14)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated.

Almost all respondents (12 out of 14) described ways in which the Plan helped broaden the stakeholder base of those concerned with the issue of ending homelessness in the community. One participant described CCEH as “more inclusive” than prior groups organizing collaborative efforts to end homelessness. This participant continued by saying that the Plan engaged the business community in particular. Other stakeholders mentioned increased involvement by the County and criminal justice system. Several

participants mentioned the importance of the representation of family providers in the same forum as singles providers. A Multnomah County elected official described the transition from the former focus on shelter provision to the focus on permanent housing in the Plan as a “180 degree turn.” A former City elected official described the uniqueness of the plan as its ability to “get people with varied stakes in one room for the first time.” The variance in “how” the base was broadened and to “whom” shows the range of people brought in to the fold as viewed by people representing the entire range of stakeholders.

Less than 1/3 of respondents (4 out of 14) described specific resources, which supported the growth of the stakeholder base. A nonprofit staff person and a staff person from the City (former staff person for an elected official) described the importance of dedicating a staff person from the City to support organizing collaborative efforts. Two other participants, one former City staff currently working for a nonprofit and one staff person for an elected official at the City, described the importance of research and the dissemination of data regarding models to effectively end homelessness.

A former elected official from the City simply said, “No” the plan did not change stakeholder composition, “It is the same old guard.” This participant was particularly disappointed in the participation in efforts from leaders in the business community and other elected officials. “Not enough elected officials have much interest...it’s sad they have to keep rolling me out” s/he said. S/he described the lack of interest from the business community as a “pathetic thing” stating that they “...only care about people peeing in their doorways, they don’t care about the families they do not see.”

### Summary

A wide variety of stakeholders view the Plan as effectively bringing new people together to end homelessness. Several participants identified key resources that effectively broadened the stakeholder base including dedicated staff and research.



## What is needed for the future?

The next set of findings describes stakeholders' views of *what is necessary to improve or maintain current efforts* to end homelessness. Findings are summarized in Table 10.

Table 10. Future Efforts

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Stakeholder Engagement	4	2*	2	3*	0	0	11(10)
Money	5	1	1	0	0	0	7
Other Resources	3	1	1	0	1	0	6
Economic Crisis	3	0	0	1	1	0	5
Leadership	0	1*	1	1*	1	0	4(3)
Improved Collaboration	0	2	1	0	1	0	4
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>9*</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated.

Fifty percent (10 out of 20) of respondents described stakeholder involvement as key to maintaining and improving efforts to end homelessness. Participants mentioned a variety of issues. First several participants mentioned the importance of developing stronger relationships with the business and faith community. Additionally, several participants described the threat of losing stakeholders, because of the economic climate. Last, many others described the importance of maintaining broad community investment. These respondents reflect all stakeholder groups with the exception of Multnomah County elected officials and their staff (it is important to note the limited size of this sample).

Over 1/3 (7 out of 20) of participants stated that funding for services and housing is crucial to improve efforts. Participants mentioned the importance of federal funding, as well as finding new funding streams to support continued efforts. Of these respondents 5 out of 7 were stakeholders in the nonprofit category. It is likely that this finding is associated to the dismal economic climate in which nonprofits are struggling to maintain funding.

Nearly 1/3 (6 out of 20) described other necessary resources which varied widely. One executive director of a nonprofit mentioned the need for “innovative thinking” (1) and a different character altogether to the bureaucratic “system” with which people interface. Another nonprofit executive director said a “new slogan” is needed that better “speaks to multi-dimensional character of ending homelessness. (By this, the participant was referencing the spectrum of available housing i.e. Housing First or “wet houses”, housing for people actively in recovery, etc. to meet the varied needs of people coming from homelessness and support their success in housing). One city staff person mentioned the need for better data. A former City elected official said that housing needs to be treated as “city-basic infrastructure just like transportation, fire, water, sewer as opposed to the transportation mafia [which seems to receive an inordinate amount of money].” This

finding directs us to the myriad ways in which stakeholders believe efforts to end homelessness need to be sustained and improved.

One-quarter (5/20) of respondents emphasized the economy in crisis. One nonprofit executive director said that s/he believes the 10-year Plan is “eclipsed” by the current recession. Another participant from the nonprofit stakeholder group said audaciously, “We need to develop a new economy.” A current Multnomah County elected official noting the economic strength of the City stated that the City’s role will have to get bigger.” Similar to the predominance of nonprofits raising the issue of funding, 3 of the 5 respondents discussed here are stakeholders representing the nonprofit category.

One-fifth of respondents (4 out of 20) emphasized the need for improved collaboration. A City staff person mentioned “better alignment” and another described “improved understanding between social workers and cops.” The respondent furthered that s/he would offer more support for the 10-Year Plan if stakeholders also respected the need for a “ten-minute plan” meeting peoples’ most immediate needs. A former City elected official stated that a “firmer local movement” not swayed by the “whims of federal initiatives” is needed. Within the responses noted here, each emphasizes improved collaboration in a different way. The first statement “better alignment” describes improved delivery systems, while better understanding between police and social workers involves addressing philosophical differences. Last, the stakeholder who mentioned a “firmer local movement” raises the complexities of such an effort.

A handful (3 out of 20) of respondents said that improved leadership is necessary in their efforts to end homelessness. One respondent described deep disappointment in the growth of political leadership to maintain efforts to end homelessness. Additionally, this respondent suggested significant room for growth of leaders from the business community. It is worth noting that these respondents represent a former City elected official and former staff for a City elected who now is a staff person at the City and a Multnomah County elected official.

One stakeholder, a former City Commissioner poignantly described that the root causes of homelessness that are not addressed by the Plan, but are needed to effectively address homelessness. S/he said, “The plan implies, but does not address explicitly the need chronically homeless people have for connection to the greater community, dignity and self worth...” Illustrating his point, he described a scenario in which there were two chronically homeless people who were equally as bad off, but one makes it in to housing, while the other does not. S/he said the difference between the two is that the person who does not make it in to housing (that is, engage in the application process fully) has a “spirit” that is “broken...or whatever you want to call it that intrinsically connects us as humans.” The difference, s/he furthered, “...is not the intelligence of one peer versus another. It is that at some point one of the two has become subhuman almost. They have no connections.”

Later in the interview this stakeholder emphasized the need for meaningful points of contact between the broader community and the homeless community. S/he said that over the years s/he “...has become more radicalized” and if s/he had to chose “what

would make the difference for people over all else,” s/he would emphasize the “human connection.” “When that happens, it will bring the spirit back to life and those individuals who could not solve the problem before will know how to solve the problem themselves [getting themselves into housing, if it is available].”

Another stakeholder described what they are already doing to improve their efforts instead of sharing about improvements that could be made in the future. Last, one stakeholder stated that no improvements could be made.

### Summary

In summary, describing what is needed for the future, many respondents from all stakeholder categories mentioned the need for stakeholder involvement. Many respondents representing nonprofits mentioned funding and losing stakeholders, because of the economic climate. Several elected officials mentioned the need for continued leadership. Many stakeholders mentioned a variety of abstract resources necessary for the success of future efforts. Respondents also mentioned improved collaboration and attending to the root causes of homelessness.

### Personal Emphasis

Respondents were asked to share additional information about which they had not been asked, or to further comment on questions previously asked. Findings are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11. Personal Emphasis of Stakeholder

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
History/ Legacy	2	0	0	1	0	1	3
Future Oriented	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
General Observations	11*	11*	1	0	0	0	5(4)
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>9*</b>	<b>5*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*20 (11)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or no denotation.

Almost half of the participants responding to this question gave future oriented responses. One City staff person mentioned the importance of keeping the issue “front and center.” A former City elected official said that she has “optimism for the future, because the feds are giving money to HAP and we have finally passed a document recording fee [a stable source of funding for low-income housing]. A staff person for an elected official at the County said that their “biggest goal is pure collaboration” mentioning also that sometimes one can get the sense that the “sun rises and sets over Portland.” This statement implies the stakeholder’s view that this inordinate emphasis on Portland impedes “pure collaboration.” A staff person for a City elected official recommended collecting data on a nonprofit faith based agency, because on their sense that the future of

this initiative lies in “how to get everyday people involved.” Last, a nonprofit staff person relayed their sense that addressing the issue effectively involves the “feds” who “...have a huge role to play.” These responses demonstrate a variety of ways that stakeholders from many different categories are considering the future of their efforts.

Several respondents (3 out of 11) described historic anti-poverty movements both locally and more generally. One nonprofit staff person said that “Historically, anti-poverty movements burnout.” He furthered that there are “Cynics and believers in the plan” and that he is a “...cynic of the believer.” Another nonprofit executive director said that “...connecting policy and advocacy is a part of the City’s legacy.” A current staff person for a City elected official mentioned their efforts as a “part of the City’s history”, although it has had to contend with the division of oversight between the County and City.

A handful of participants (3 out of 19) took the opportunity to give their general observations of efforts to end homelessness. One participant from the City was particularly weary of the validity of the early numbers the City came up with which supported the Plan’s earlier successes saying, “...I think they were overly optimistic.” Another participant described the work s/he does which supports efforts to end homelessness on a national level, s/he said that it does not matter what locale, there are “...themes to how people work together and how they don’t.” Last, a former City elected official emphasized his growing sense of the importance of “nontangibles” such as “human connection.” These responses point to the importance for stakeholders in emphasizing, the history, optimism and wisdom they bring to their efforts to end homelessness.

### Summary

These responses demonstrate the personal importance of certain issues pertaining to their efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah Co. First, the importance of forward thinking is demonstrated by stakeholder responses. Second, stakeholders also illustrate the importance of their efforts in a local and national historical context. Last, stakeholders share their sense of the greatest wisdom they have arrived at through their years of service to the effort.

### Research Assumption

These findings summarize participant responses to a question regarding an *underlying assumption of this research*, which is: stakeholder viewpoints are impacted by the positions they hold and their relative proximity to the issue. Respondents were asked to share their thoughts about this assumption. Findings are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12. Research Assumption

Response	Nonprofit	City of Portland Staff	City of Portland EO	City of Portland EO Staff	Multnomah Co. EO	Mult Co. EO Staff	Total
Affirm	8	5	2	3	2	1	21(19)
Proximity to Issue	2	1*	1	2*	1	0	7(6)
Enmeshment	1	2	1	0	0	0	4
All Perspectives Needed	4*	1*	0	0	0	0	5(4)
Advocate Role	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
Elected Officials Matter Most.	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
Differences	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total Respondents to Question</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*21(19)</b>
<b>Total Interviewees</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*22 (20)</b>

\*=stakeholder counted in more than one category.

() =actual number unduplicated or no denotation.

All respondents to this question (19 out of 19) agreed that the position (their role within the organization or collaborative network) of the stakeholder impacts his/her perspective of the issue. Nearly 1/3 (6 out of 19) described the stakeholder's perspective as impacted by their proximity to the issue. With the exception of the one staff person for a Multnomah County elected official, all stakeholder groups are represented here. This demonstrates a broadly accepted view that stakeholders' view the issue from different vantage points, which impacts their relative perspectives. Over 1/5 of respondents (4 out of 19) elaborated on this point saying that some people as positioned so close to the issue as to be "enmeshed" and lose perspective. Respondents represent stakeholders associated with the City (staff and elected official's staff) and one nonprofit staff person.

Over 1/5 of respondents described that all perspectives are needed. Interestingly, all of these respondents are currently nonprofit staff people (one of whom is a former City staff person). Sharing a similar viewpoint, 3 out of 19 participants said that an advocate is an advocate no matter their position. One former elected official said, "Your view depends on where you sit...however, if you are an advocate, this stakeholder group is largely on the same page." This response is shared by City and County staff and a former City elected official. Perhaps the slight difference in stakeholder responses of nonprofit staff and those represented in the latter response reflects City and County bureaucrats and elected officials not being on the "front lines" to the same degree as nonprofit staff, but viewing themselves as advocates, nevertheless.

Two participants (out of 19), one current elected official and one former staff for an elected official described the elected official as having "more responsibility" in some respects. As one elected official for the County stated, "...stakeholders can have a positive impact by affecting policy and making positive changes in the right direction...elected power has more responsibility to make this happen than leaders who have not been elected by the public."

Another two participants emphasized the differences in stakeholders. One City staff person stated that stakeholders are “different people with different priorities.” A nonprofit staff person described deeply ingrained “core differences” that exist. This person stated that “...life impacts what you prioritize, how you think about people and this can create fairly core differences between stakeholders, which are challenging.” One staff person for a faith-based nonprofit stated that this subjective vantage point “...impacts where you look for solutions.”

### Summary

When asked their thoughts regarding the basic research assumption that the position of the stakeholder impacts their perspective, the majority agreed that one's position informs one's perspective in many ways. Several respondents mentioned the issue of loss of perspective through “enmeshment”. Many stakeholders from all categories agreed that all perspectives as integral to their efforts. Two stakeholders from the elected official and staff person for an elected official categories shared their sense that the elected official has more responsibility than other leaders in efforts to end homelessness. Other responses described “core differences” in stakeholders and how one is positioned impacts where solutions are sought.

### Overall Summary of Findings

The data collected examines five areas: stakeholder position (in organization and perspective on collaboration), inputs or elements in the community where the plan was developed and implemented. The data also examines the outcomes of the Plan observed by stakeholders as well as their perceptions of future of efforts to end homelessness. The personal emphasis of stakeholders is mentioned as many stakeholders raised issues that suggested a strong personal interest of their own that the participants wanted to share. Last, stakeholder views regarding the basic assumption made in this research- that stakeholder viewpoints are impacted by their role in addressing the issue- is explored. Stakeholders held a variety of positions including, but not limited to: a former community organizer, former City of Portland Commissioners and current County Commissioners.

### Stakeholder Definition of Collaboration

Stakeholders across all categories appeared to share similar working definitions of collaboration. A majority of definitions held by stakeholders emphasize who collaborative efforts to end homelessness involve and what processes are utilized (Gray, 1991, Julian, 1994 and Selin and Chavez, 1995). Second, stakeholders described the intended outcomes of collaborative efforts (Wood and Gray, 1991 and Selin and Chavez, 1995). Last, many stakeholders' provided more philosophical insight into the nature of collaboration (Wood and Gray, 1991, Selin and Chavez, 1995 and Rich et al, 2001).

### Inputs

This section examined the general impact of prior efforts to end homelessness on current ones, the impact of prior efforts on the strength (or weakness) of the 10-year Plan specifically and the elements in the community that have facilitated, or impeded efforts to end homelessness.

### Supporting

The data collected suggests that stakeholders emphasize the work with which they have been most intimately involved. For example *elected officials and their staff* most often noted, the importance of political leadership and systemic changes (shelter reconfiguration) requiring their leadership (Burt et al, 2007). *Nonprofit staff* was more likely to note the “historicity” of their efforts. *All stakeholders* shared their sense that individual champions of initiatives to end homelessness have been highly important to their successes (Burt et al, 2007). Events generating energy to support efforts to end homelessness (Burt et al, 2007) and policies to institutionalize resources (and their best use) allocated to ending homelessness were noted by a *majority of stakeholders*.

Burt et al’s (2007) identifies all of these elements (with the exception of historicity) as key elements found in successful community-wide homelessness prevention strategies. The (2007) study identifies “...mechanisms for accurate targeting [of those most vulnerable to homelessness], a high level of jurisdictional commitment, significant mainstream agency involvement, and mechanisms for continuous system improvement” (213), which are largely systems related.

The second set of elements relate to what Burt et al (2007) describes as “community organization” and includes three characteristics: community motivation (supported in this study’s finding by stakeholders’ mention of the importance of individual champions and events), maximizing resources (systems change and collaboration) and leadership (champions).

### Impeding

In terms of elements impeding efforts to end homelessness, respondents across *all stakeholder groups* noted a lack of funding. Other issues raised include: the nature of collaboration, lack of initiative, structural issues (the division between City and County community provisions), historical events (on a local and national level), inadequacies of the Plan’s slogan and unmet expected outcomes of the Plan, which have not been effectively addressed. The findings of this study do not reflect (or offer insight into) Rich et al’s (2001) study that found the phase of the initiative and antagonistic relationships between CBOs and city governments were impediments to efforts. However, in many instances they do demonstrate a potentially systemic proclivity to emphasize certain data. For example, as an executive director of a nonprofit, a person may be in more consistent contact with a particular kind of data set that an elected official may not have much contact with, such as anecdotes related to the success of clients receiving their direct social services.

### Outcomes of the Plan

Although a substantial number of respondents expressed ambivalence about the positive impacts of the plan, respondents largely agreed that the Plan positively impacted their efforts. Among positive outcomes noted by respondents were: the implementation of effective housing models and awareness-raising for providers and community members

about those models, getting new stakeholders to (or closer to) the proverbial “table” and the Plan’s success as an initiative which integrated family providers into the discussion of resource allocation for housing for the homeless, in particular. This data points to notable outcomes generated by the Plan, which are significant to stakeholders and their efforts. Last, many stakeholders note the resources by which the stakeholder base was broadened. Many stated an allocation of resources that enabled the collaborative process to be successful (for example, City dedicating staff to organizing stakeholders). It is worth noting that the City built infrastructure within its staffing to address the issue of homelessness; this demonstrates a significant commitment (Burt, 2007). These findings certainly echo those of Rich et al’s (2001) study finding “...collaborations yielding substantial benefits ...”(197).

#### Future

As their efforts proceed, all stakeholders expressed a need for maintained or improved stakeholder involvement. This is at a time in which many nonprofits expressed concern about funding losses resulting in decreased collaborative efforts. Several elected officials (former and current) described the need for continued leadership (the importance of which they have noted in previous responses). Stakeholders also mentioned abstract or philosophical improvements such as improved collaboration and addressing the root causes of homelessness.

#### Personal Emphasis

When stakeholders were asked if they had additional data they wanted to contribute to the study, several themes emerged. First, many respondents emphasized the importance of forward thinking in a variety of ways. Second, stakeholders described their efforts in the larger local or national context. Last, respondents took the opportunity to describe their greatest insights from years of working to end homelessness.

#### Research Assumptions

The majority of participants agreed that a participant’s relative “position” to the issue impacts their perspective. In this discussion respondents mentioned the problem of “enmeshment” among stakeholders. Nonprofit staff often responded that “all perspectives” were “important,” while elected officials and their staff were more likely to describe their alliance to the issue despite their relative distance (versus that of an Executive Director overseeing direct service provision). Elected officials and their staff emphasized the unique and important role of elected officials in supporting these efforts. Other participants described philosophical core difference which can make collaboration challenging.



## Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions from Findings

*How sophisticated were collaborative efforts before the Plan?* Stakeholders suggested that Portland and Multnomah County are unique in a variety of ways which set the stage for the Plan's implementation. People described the characteristic compassion of the citizenry, bureaucrats and elected officials as unusual. Additionally, many had been involved in collaborative efforts to end homelessness long before the arrival of the 10-year Plan. I suspect stakeholders are right in their perception that the resources (in the community's character, systems improvement and collaborative relationships) that had been cultivated over a period of time supported the strength of this initiative.

*How much do pre-existing efforts matter?* The decades of efforts to end homelessness in the community appear to matter quite a lot. As the national initiative was unveiled, the City of Portland and Multnomah County received coveted grants amounting in millions of dollars to support their efforts. Again, I think stakeholders are right to acknowledge that the previous decades of work done to address the issue of homelessness "paid off big" as it positioned the City and County to receive highly competitive grants. In turn, this substantial influx of funds increased the momentum and strength of their efforts.

*Would Portland and Multnomah County be different without the plan?* In the eyes of stakeholders, the answer to this question is debatable. Some stakeholders noted significant positive outcomes, while others seemed less impressed. If the Plan had not come along, it is likely another local or national initiative would have emerged in its stead. It is also likely that Portland would have been well positioned to use the initiative to create positive changes in the community, but these hypothetical outcomes might have been different than those produced by this Plan.

Specifically, the Plan gave leaders a new forum with broadened inclusivity to leverage their influence and power to build capacity. The biggest impact of the Plan seems to be an opening for family providers to establish greater representation at the "table" during discussions of housing for the homeless. This has given family providers a voice to describe inequities in the distribution of these resources with strengthened legitimacy.

Additionally, stakeholders mentioned the importance of specific individuals including the politician who pushed the agenda in a way a person in another role could not; the savvy of the City staff person who took risks, gained the trust of stakeholders and facilitated the resolution of sometimes contentious issues; the nonprofit staff person who maintained pressure on elected officials to be accountable to the issue. In many respects, this reflects my sense that *the Plan would not have had its potency without the specific stakeholders that converged upon it.*

*Are there systemic differences in stakeholders which can be attributed to the stakeholder category into which they fit?* Beyond differences which are intuitively apparent, there do not seem to be any other notable differences between stakeholders. Stakeholders interviewed for this project seemed to recognize and honor any inherent differences in

their roles, responsibilities and oversight; to their benefit, this is likely to lend itself to more collaborative capability.

### Recommendations

*What will support the longevity of efforts to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County?* As stakeholders mentioned with frequency, money is needed to support the level of services needed. A spectrum of available supportive housing is required to adequately meet the need for this resource. This means

- long-term transitional housing (2 years) for those who are capable of more independent living after they have stabilized;
- permanent supportive housing for people who need a higher level of care;
- housing based on the “housing first” model, as well as clean and sober housing for those in recovery.

The spectrum and intensity of services needed for vulnerable populations to be successful in housing comes with a price.

Second, for this issue to maintain its primacy regardless of political leadership (on a national and local level), or the state of the economy, peripheral partners must be persuaded to institutionalize their commitment to the issue. For example, this would require a partner from the private sector pushing her/his organization to adopt the initiative as part of its core mission, upon which its board would vote. Of course, like any good marketing campaign new “converts” must constantly be cultivated, as well.

Third, opportunities for the broader community to establish and develop their interest in the issue need to be available. Nonprofits, advocacy organizations, elected officials and their staff have a large role to play in making the issue “present” in the lives of the general public through media and educational campaigns, volunteer opportunities and lobbying on behalf of their interest or constituent base. The general public needs to understand the harsh realities about which they should care as well as the research-based interventions that minimize the suffering of those living in homelessness.

Forth, people will aim high, if the vision they are being asked to “buy-in” to seems doable. In other words, this requires more than “caring”; people need to believe that the vision of a new and better quality of life is possible (for themselves and their neighbors) through their support of the initiative. This requires “champions” of the cause that can not only get people on board, but keep them on board. Continual engagement in the cause and demonstration of the successes made possible through stakeholder support are vital. This requires a great deal of resources (institutional commitment, planning, research, etc.).

These conclusions and recommendations are offered for consideration as Portland and Multnomah County continue to develop collaborative capacity to end homelessness. They may offer useful insights to other communities building their capacity as well. It is my hope that these efforts continue to develop widespread support and even greater successes.

## **Chapter 6: Validity and Reliability of the Data**

While this study could be considered exhaustive in its purposive nature and the circular references among stakeholders, the network of people involved in the efforts considered here is expansive (on a regional and national scale). Stakeholders suggested interviewing business leaders and leaders from the faith community, which were outside the scope of this study. In addition, because of the timeline of this project and its purposive methodology, some stakeholder categories have a small sample size. This makes it difficult to generalize conclusions, however, the data collected can point us to certain characteristics of the community, which are likely to be related to how the plan manifested and its strengths. At the very minimum, the data collected points to certain shared narratives about collaboration and the 10-year Plan to End Homelessness in Portland and Multnomah, County. Last, this project largely examined leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors who had integral roles in shaping, implementing, or supporting the Plan, so their relative support for it is somewhat implicit. Nevertheless, the data collected draws out what elements in the community set the stage for the Plan, have carried it through to fruition and the necessary tools to support the efficacy of future efforts to end homelessness.

## Appendix 1

### Interview Questions and Consent Form

#### I. Position of Interviewee. (2)

*Your role in efforts to end homelessness and personal sense of collaboration regarding efforts to end homelessness are important to clearly understand your responses to the questions that will follow. Also, this may lend insight into how stakeholder viewpoints converge and diverge depending on the stakeholder's position of reference.*

1. What role(s) have you played in the development/ implementation of the 10-year plan and other collaborative efforts to end homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah Co.?
2. How do you define collaboration in the context of efforts to end homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah Co.?

#### II. Elements in the Community Supporting/ Obstructing Collaborative Efforts to End Homelessness (4)

*An aim of this study is to better understand how stakeholders perceive the varied strengths and weaknesses in their efforts to end homelessness and better understand how these views compare & contrast among stakeholders.*

1. In your community what do you see as facilitating long-term solutions to ending chronic homelessness?
2. Have there been catalytic events / leaders/ policies that have fostered collaborative efforts to end homelessness? How have they done this?
3. What in the community do you see as obstructing<sup>14</sup> long-term solutions<sup>15</sup> to ending chronic homelessness?
4. How did collaborative efforts prior to 10-year plan impact the composition of the organizing bodies we currently see? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this?

#### III. 10-year Plan and Collaboration (5)

*Another aim of this study is to better understand stakeholder perceptions of the role of the 10-year plan in the development of collaborative bodies engaged in efforts to end homelessness.*

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<sup>14</sup>My use of the word “obstruction” refers to significant variables (funding, leadership, systems) that block or delay the full capability of collaborative efforts to end homelessness.

<sup>15</sup> The use of the word “solutions” refers to the development of successful methods that reduce chronic homelessness and increase permanent housing options for vulnerable community members.

1. Has the ten-year plan **strengthened** collaborative efforts to end homelessness? How and why/ not? Role and impact?
2. How did the development of a 10-year Plan impact the **composition** of collaborative efforts? How has this changed efforts to end homelessness, or have efforts remained the same?
3. **Alternatively**, in your opinion did the **already existing collaborations** to end homelessness support an environment in which the 10-year plan would be successfully developed and implemented?
4. *Or, do you see the ten-year plan and/or other collaborative efforts as weak all together? In that case, what is your sense of the first steps that need to be taken to organize efforts to end homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah Co.?*
5. How do you think collaborative efforts to end homelessness could be **improved**?

#### IV. Stakeholder Perceptions of Assumption Underlying Research (1)

*Last, this project presumes that the positions of stakeholders impact their perceptions of key issues facing this community, so I would like to pose this question to you:*

1. Do you think the position of a stakeholder [refer to list of stakeholder types] impacts their perceptions of key issues facing the community re: homelessness, housing, the 10-year plan? How?

#### V. Conclusion (3)

1. Is there anything else that you would like to add?
2. Are there any people you recommend I talk to further (City, County, staff and PO, or NP agencies)?
3. Can I contact you if there any details of our interview that I would like to follow up on?
4. When I write up the results and present the results to others, I can keep things that you tell me anonymous, not mentioning your name or position, or I could identify you, depending on your desires. Would you prefer to remain anonymous in the written research \_y/n\_, oral defense \_y/n\_ and/ or all other aspects \_y/n\_ of the research?

*Written Consent Form* (template taken from: <http://humansubjects.uoregon.edu/ICwritten.htm>).

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by myself, Katie Baum, a Student from the Department of Planning, Public Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. I hope to learn about building collaborative capacity to end homelessness. This research will be used to fulfill the terminal project requirements to receive my degree. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been a participant in the organizing efforts of which I am interested.

If you decide to participate, you are agreeing to an interview. The interview includes ten open-ended questions that should take no longer than 45 minutes to answer. An interview will be performed at a location of your interest or over the telephone. At the end of the interview, I will request your permission to contact you again if I find there is additional information that I need from you. The interview should involve minimal risks as it pertains to information that is not personal in nature. Your participation is free of costs and voluntary. You can choose to end your participation at any time.

When I write up the results and present the results to others, I can keep things that you tell me anonymous, not mentioning your name or position, or I could identify you, depending on your desires. If you prefer to remain anonymous, data from your interview will be described so that your identity is unidentifiable. However, if you choose to share your identity, your anonymity cannot be ensured.

The purpose of the interview is to collect data on the divergent and convergent viewpoints of key stakeholders regarding collaboration and the potency of the ten-year plan to end homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah County. This information has the potential to support the creation of more effective policy, implementation and collaborative efforts to address housing and homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah County and other urban settings as well.

Benefits may include an improved understanding of the processes by which humans organize scarce resources to ensure that vulnerable community members are living in housing. This has the potential to benefit both the social sciences and humanity. However, I cannot guarantee you personal benefit from this research.

Thank you for your participation!

## Appendix 2

### Recruitment Materials

#### *E-mail*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Katie Baum and I will be completing a Master of Public Administration this spring from the University of Oregon. Before returning to school, I spent several years working for an organization that provides subsidized housing for the chronically homeless. During that time, I became interested in how communities collaborate to organize scarce resources to care for their more vulnerable members. I am particularly interested in this in the context of the 10-year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in the City of Portland/ Multnomah County.

I know that you have been very involved in issues of housing and chronic homelessness in Portland/ Multnomah County and would like to interview you to discuss what you see as key issues facing this community with regard to homelessness and the 10-year plan. The interview consists of 14 questions and should last from 30 to 45 minutes. I can provide you with the interview questions in advance.

If you are willing, when are you available for a telephone interview? Otherwise, if you have any questions that I could answer, which would assist your consideration, please let me know. I understand that you are busy, so if I don't hear from you, I will follow-up with a phone call in a few days.

Thank you, in advance, for your time.

Best,  
Katie Baum  
MPA Candidate  
Nonprofit Certificate Candidate  
206.550.1857

Jean Stockard, PhD  
Faculty Project Adviser  
jeans@uoregon.edu  
541-346-5005

#### *Phone Script*

I: Hello, my name is Katie.

I: Is this \_\_\_\_\_?

P: Y/N

I: I am a graduate student at the University of Oregon working on my Masters in Public Admin and I sent you an e-mail a few days ago about my interest in interviewing you for my thesis regarding building collaborative capacity and the 10-year plan to end homelessness in Multnomah Co/ Portland.

P: Oh, yes, I received that/ remind me...

I: I am calling to follow up and see if you would be willing to participate in an interview on the topic. To give you a sense... The interview will cover 14 questions and should not last longer than 45 minutes.

I: I can send you the questions in advance, so if you have time you can review them.

I: Can you participate in my research?

P: N

I: Thank you for your time.

<OR> PI: Y

I: When are you available?> set up time for interview.

I: Thank you for your time. I look forward to talking with you further.

#### *Answering Machine*

I: Hello, my name is Katie and I am calling for \_\_\_\_\_

I: I am a graduate student at the University of Oregon working on my Masters in Public Admin. and I sent you an e-mail a few days ago about my interest in interviewing you for my thesis regarding building collaborative capacity and the 10-year plan to end homelessness in Multnomah Co/ Portland.

I: I am calling to follow up and see if you would be willing to participate in an interview on the topic. To give you a sense...The interview will cover 15 questions and should not last longer than 45 minutes.

I: Please give me a call or I will call you back in the next couple days to see about your interest in participating and scheduling an interview.

*Update w/ first e-mail stuff*

*Follow-up E-mail If No Call Is Returned*

Dear [Insert Name],

My name is Katie and I am a graduate student at the University of Oregon. I sent you an e-mail a few days ago about my interest in interviewing you for my thesis regarding building collaborative capacity and the 10-year plan to end homelessness in Multnomah Co/ Portland. I am writing to follow-up and see if you would be willing to participate in an interview on the topic. To give you a sense...The interview will cover 15 questions and should not last longer than 45 minutes.

Please give me a call or I will call you back in the next couple days to see about your interest in participating and scheduling an interview.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Katie Baum  
MPA Candidate  
Nonprofit Certificate Candidate  
206.550.1857

Jean Stockard, Ph.D.  
Faculty Project Advisor  
[jeans@uoregon.edu](mailto:jeans@uoregon.edu)  
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### Appendix 3

#### Interview Schedule

Interview Number	Interview Date and Time
1	2/5@4:15
2	2/10-T @ 10
3	2/9-M @ 10
4	2/17-T @ 4
5	2/18-W @10
6	2/20- F @ 9
7	2/25-W @ 10
8	2/25-W @12
9	2-27-F@2
10	2/27-F@ 3:30
11	3/2-M @11:30
12	3/3@11:15
13	3/4-W @10
14	3/9-M@10
15	3/13-F@1:45
16	3/13-F@ 4
17	3/19-TR @ 11
18	3/20-F@ 2:30
19	3/23-M@2
20	Reminder 3/18-W

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